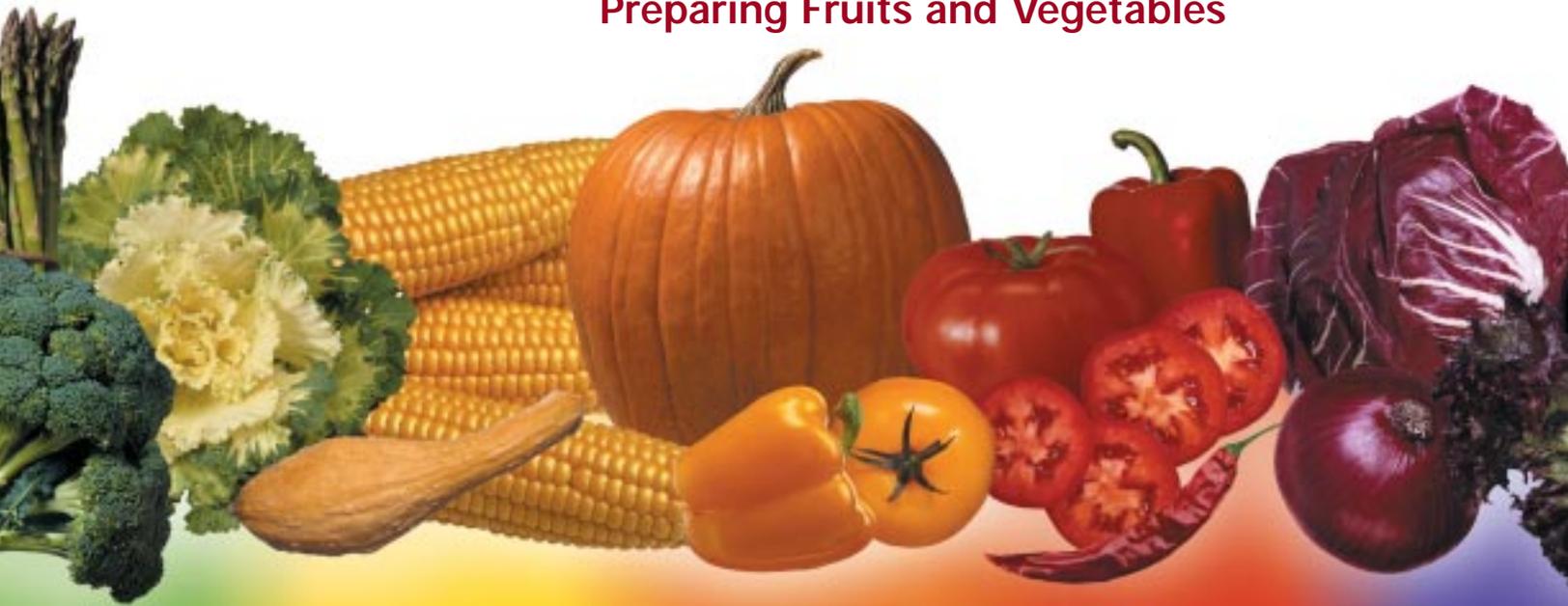




Tricks of the Trade

Preparing Fruits and Vegetables





www.fns.usda.gov/tn

Source documents for Tricks of the Trade included:

- *Salad Bar Instructions 2001-2002*, Los Angeles Unified School District, Ivy L. Marx, RD, Field Nutrition Specialist, LAUSD
- *Salad Bar Guide*, SYSCO Food Services of Portland, Inc.
- *Prepared with Pride*, Unit: Salads, Maryland State Department of Education, Nutrition and Transportation Services Branch, Stewart Eidell, Nutrition and Education Training Specialist
- *5 A Day the Color Way*, Pinellas County, 2002, Pinellas County, Florida School Food Service Staff, Dolores McCoy, Nutrition Specialist
- *Fresh-2-You The Florida Way*, Florida Departments of Education and Agriculture
- *Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals*, National Food Service Management Institute
- *Equipment Efficiency for Healthy School Meals*, Satellite Seminar, National Food Service Management Institute
- *Serving It Safe – A Manager's Tool Kit*, 1996, USDA, Food and Consumer Service, Publication Number FCS-295; Revised 2002, National Food Service Management Institute, Publication Number ET 38-02 (IG)
- *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*, 1998, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Publication Number FNS 303
- *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, 2002, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Publication Number PA 1331
- *A Guide for Purchasing Foodservice Equipment*, 1999, National Food Service Management Institute/USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Order Number NFSMI-R-35-98
- *The New Design Handbook for School Food Service*, 1997, National Food Service Management Institute, Publication Number EX 11-95
- Food Safety and Inspection Service Web site, www.fsis.usda.gov
- *Eat Your Colors Every Day Salad Bar and Salad Options*, Pinellas County, 2002, Pinellas County, Florida School Food Service Staff, Dolores McCoy, Nutrition Specialist and the Produce for Better Health Foundation

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Tricks of the Trade

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Salad Bars



Excitement!

A salad bar is a great way to add excitement to your lunch meals and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables. Children, even kindergarteners, love to create their own meal. They are more likely to eat unfamiliar foods if they can choose them.

Variety!

Add variety – the choice is yours:

- Typical salads, vegetables, and fruits
- Exotic, unusual ingredients
- Theme bars – ethnic or holiday themes
- Specialty food stations – taco, chili, potato, etc.

Success!

Success is measured in increased participation and customer satisfaction. To create success:

- Involve the customer.
- Have quality food preparation, appetizing presentation, and great service.
- Energetically market and merchandise your food and cafeteria.



Salad Bars

General Guidelines for Salad Bars

When you've decided on a salad bar, there are several steps to making sure it's a rousing success:

Inform

- Before opening the salad bar, meet with the following groups separately: school administration, faculty, school nurses, students, parents, custodial staff, and foodservice staff. Discuss the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, along with the health benefits; aims of the program; its unique benefits; and the importance of their support for students' acceptance of the salad bar. Other subjects that should be included are salad bar etiquette, ways to promote the salad bar, barriers that are unique to the school, their roles in monitoring safety and line speed, and the locations of the salad bars.



Train

- Train the foodservice staff on how to receive, store, and prepare the foods for the salad bar. Discuss how to maintain the salad bar for attractiveness and food safety, monitor the students' choices, take accurate meal counts, replenish food items, help students on the salad bar line, and generally ensure efficient operation of the salad bar. There should be initial and ongoing training. We have included a helpful publication on CD-ROM, *Culinary Techniques: Cooking Fruits, Salads, and Vegetables with Flair*. Developed by the National Food Service Management Institute, it contains interactive learning activities, glossary, recipes, video clips, activity index, and links to resources on the Web – all with a focus on maintaining food quality.

Advertise

- Advertise the salad bar menu, so students and staff know the day's delight.
- Post the menu in:
 - a visible area in the cafeteria
 - the kitchen
 - homeroom classes
 - teachers' lounges
- Announce the menu over the public address (PA) system and in the school bulletin.

TIP:

See *Meal Appeal: Attracting Customers* for other marketing ideas.

Monitor

- Go back to school administration, faculty, students, and foodservice staff to obtain feedback on the salad bar.
- Track amounts of foods served to determine preferences, and make adjustments as necessary.
- Review the costs and benefits of the salad bar.
- Observe how the salad bar is maintained, and make improvements as needed.
- Check to ensure safety and quality of food.
- Check food temperatures and keep records.
- Keep food out of the danger zone (41 °F to 140 °F).



Salad Bar Etiquette and Rules of Conduct

Excite the students and adults about the salad bar, and they will come! Before each salad bar is rolled out, advertise and promote it heavily. Some excellent ways to bring attention to each “grand” salad bar opening are to speak at faculty staff and parent/teachers’ meetings, make presentations at assemblies, and visit classrooms. Include salad bar etiquette in your presentations.

In one school district, school foodservice staff visited one class in each school and discussed salad bar etiquette. After several sessions, the class then performed a skit during a school assembly on how to “show good manners” at the salad bar. See “Salad Bar Etiquette” on the next page.

TIP:

Post the “Salad Bar Etiquette” list on the next page near the salad bar.

Creating the Bar

What kinds of salad bars are right for your school? Your choices will be guided by consideration of such factors as the age groups you serve, preparation facilities, food safety, and staffing. “Salad Bar Options,” which begins on page 13, will help you clarify your ideas and stimulate you to try new ones. What is important is to stretch your imagination and resources to help your children enjoy more fruits and vegetables for better health.

Some possibilities are:

- Self-service vs. assisted service
- Salad bar incorporated into the serving line as a fruit and vegetable choice
- Salad bar as a reimbursable meal option on the serving line
- Free-standing salad bar outside the serving line as an add-on to the meal
- Free-standing salad bar as a separate reimbursable meal serving line with register
- Second or third serving line dedicated to salad bar and other fresh fruit and vegetable options



Menu Planning

Each school is different, and its students have different tastes. Whether you are planning menus for the salad bar or the regular serving line, the same principles apply. Create a menu that meets the tastes of your students by:

- Obtaining student input through student organizations such as the Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC). For information on NAC, visit the American School Food Service Association at www.asfsa.org/morethanschoolmeals/nac/.
- Obtaining staff input (from the foodservice employees, teachers, teacher assistants, school nurses, custodians, social workers, and administrators).
- Letting a student committee occasionally plan the menu for one day with advice and oversight from the school foodservice department.

Salad Bar Etiquette

- 1 Always wash your hands first.
- 2 Use utensils. NEVER USE YOUR FINGERS.
- 3 If a utensil or plate falls on the floor, don't put it back. Tell a cafeteria person.
- 4 Don't taste food items at the salad bar.
- 5 Take a small amount of new foods to try.
- 6 Take only what you can eat.
- 7 Don't bring food back to the salad bar.
- 8 DON'T PUT YOUR HEAD UNDER THE SNEEZE GUARD OR FOOD SHIELD. Ask a friend or a cafeteria person to help if you can't reach.
- 9 Always be polite in line. Wait your turn.
- 10 Always use a clean plate for seconds.



Menus should be planned for variety, nutrition, and acceptability. Steps to successful menu planning are:

- Schedule a time to plan.
- Think about where you are and where you want to go. Determine a time period or number of days or weeks for which menus will be planned.
- Focus on the age or grade group(s) you want to serve.
- Decide the number of choices you will offer.
- Consider available labor, equipment, and facility design.
- Provide fluid milk choices for salad bars that offer complete reimbursable meals.
- Make sure you are meeting the nutrition goals.
- Evaluate what you have planned.
- Use cycle menus.

TIP:

Menus should be planned to contrast color, flavor, texture, and shape. If it looks good, they might try it.

Basic menu planning principles are:

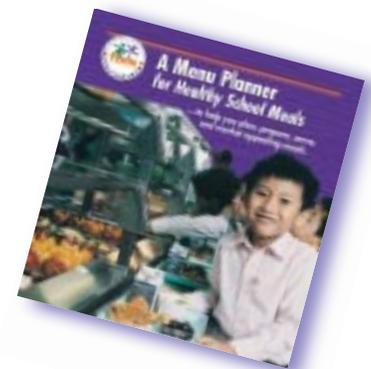
- Emphasize variety.
- Offer choices.
- Add contrast in texture, temperature, flavor, color, and shape.
- Consider eye appeal.
- Brighten with the vivid colors of fruits and vegetables.
- Use balance to achieve nutrient standards such as offering a low-fat food to balance a high-fat food.

Menu planning should address the following issues:

- Purpose, goals, and compliance requirements of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- Specific menu planning system being used – Traditional, Enhanced, or Nutrient Standard Menu Planning
- Nutrition goals established by USDA's School Meals Initiative for Healthy School Meals
- Student food preferences
- Food costs and the availability of funds
- Availability of seasonable foods
- Availability and skill of personnel
- Kitchen layout and capacity of equipment
- Food preparation and work scheduling
- Creative food merchandising to enhance customer acceptance

Resource

A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals is an excellent resource on how to plan, prepare, serve, and market healthy and appealing meals. Appendix 9 contains food sources of major nutrients. Order this resource from USDA's Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/NTISform.html.



Salad Bars

Sample Salad Bar Menus

The salad bar menus below illustrate the large variety of fruit and vegetable items available. You can choose from these menus and adapt them to your food service.

There are endless choices of items for the salad bar. The following examples show just a few of the many interesting ways to combine fresh fruits and vegetables.

SAMPLE SALAD BAR MENU #1

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Salad Greens Cucumber Slices Cherry Tomatoes Bell Pepper Rings Beets | Salad Greens Shredded Carrots Broccoli Florets Zucchini Slices Pickled Okra | Salad Greens Cauliflower Florets Green Peas Tomato Wedges Cucumber Slices | Salad Greens Baby Carrots Garbanzo Beans Celery Sticks Sliced Tomatoes | Salad Greens Shredded Red/ Green Cabbage Broccoli Florets Whole-Kernel Corn Zucchini Coins |
| Raisins Orange Wedges Apple Wedges Strawberries | Peach/Pear Halves Banana Halves Grapes Pineapple Tidbits | Kiwi Halves Orange Wedges Honeydew Chunks Apple Wedges | Banana Halves Plums Cantaloupe Chunks | Grapes Orange Wedges Apple Wedges Watermelon Wedges |
| Chicken Salad Hard-Boiled Eggs (Shelled) | Cottage Cheese Julienne Turkey Garbanzo Beans | Egg Salad Cheese Cubes Yogurt | Diced Chicken Turkey Ham | Tuna Salad Beef Salami Slices Kidney Beans |
| Cheese Sticks Soft Pretzels Wheat Crackers Whole-Wheat Bread | Tortillas Graham Crackers Whole-Wheat Bread | Bagels Animal Crackers Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll Whole-Wheat Bread | Corn Bread Pretzel Rods Whole-Wheat Bread | Hawaiian Bread Vanilla Wafers Saltines Whole-Wheat Bread |
| Milk | Milk | Milk | Milk | Milk |
| Toppings: Croutons Mushrooms | Toppings: Salsa Shredded Cheese Cilantro | Toppings: Chinese Noodles Olives | Toppings: Trail Mix Jalapeño Peppers Radishes | Toppings: Dill Pickle Chips Diced Onions |

TIPS:

- For ease in menu planning, production, and service, you may want to use a base menu and offer some new food items every day. A good suggestion is to offer one-third new items, one-third convenient or prepared foods, and one-third repeat food items.
- The repeat food items could be your base menu. An example would be to offer salad greens, broccoli, carrots, and tomatoes every day. Then add variety by using other food items.
- Encourage children to “Mix and Match to Make Your Portion” or “Build Your Own Salad.”

SAMPLE SALAD BAR MENU #2

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Salad Greens Beet Rounds Carrot/Celery Sticks Cherry Tomatoes | Salad Greens Pickled Green Beans Cherry Tomatoes Whole-Kernel Corn | Salad Greens Broccoli Florets Tomato Slices Baby Carrots Cucumber/Green Pepper Rings | Salad Greens Cherry Tomatoes Celery Slices Zucchini/Yellow Squash Coins | Salad Greens Shredded Red/ Green Cabbage Tomato Salsa Whole-Kernel Corn |
| Trail Mix Grapes Peach Slices (Canned) Banana Halves | Raisins (Boxed) Strawberries Pineapple Chunks (Canned) | Gelatin with Diced Pears (Canned) Apples Watermelon Wedges | Kiwifruit Halves Mixed Fruit (Canned) Tangerines | Trail Mix Pear Wedges Melon Choice Orange Wedges |
| Cheese Cubes Hard-Cooked Egg Julienne Ham Peanut Butter Cups | Yogurt Shredded Cheese Diced Chicken Garbanzo Beans | Mozzarella Cheese Sticks Ham Cubes Tuna Salad | Cheese Cubes Diced Turkey Kidney Beans | Chicken Fajita Strips Cottage Cheese Shredded Cheddar Cheese |
| Milk | Milk | Milk | Milk | Milk |
| Toppings: Croutons Shredded Cheese Olives Trail Mix Jalapeño Peppers Radishes Yogurt |
| Grain/Bread Choice |

Salad Bars

Ingredients To Consider for the Salad Bar

Greens:

Endive
Escarole
Lettuce varieties such as butterhead, iceberg, leaf, romaine
Fresh spinach
Red or green cabbage
Precut lettuce mix

Vegetables:

Asparagus, fresh* or canned
Beans – garbanzo, kidney, etc., cooked or canned
Beans – green, fresh* or canned
Beets, cooked or canned
Broccoli*
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Cucumbers
Green peas, frozen (thawed) or canned
Jicama
Mushrooms
Onions, red and white
Peppers – green, red, & yellow
Radishes
Scallions
Squash, yellow
Sweet potato cubes, cooked
Tomatoes, cherry
Tomatoes
Water chestnuts, sliced, canned
Zucchini

** Blanching or lightly steaming these fresh vegetables before chilling will make the color more intense and may increase their acceptability.*

Fruits:

Melon varieties (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, etc.)
Avocados
Apples
Bananas
Grapes
Kiwifruit
Oranges, fresh
Pears
Peaches
Pineapple
Plums
Strawberries
Tangerines
Trail mix
Canned fruit, all varieties – apple slices, applesauce, apricots, peaches, pears, pineapple, mixed fruit, Mandarin oranges
Frozen fruit – apple slices, blueberries, peaches, strawberries, melon balls
Dried fruit – raisins, cranberries, cherries, apples, apricots

Vegetable/Fruit Salads:

Cole slaw
Bean salad
Corn relish
Marinated vegetables (carrots, green beans, mushrooms, etc.)
Fruit salad
Waldorf salad
Potato salad
Squash salad
Green pea salad
Pickled beets

Ingredients To Consider for the Salad Bar

Protein Items (Meat/meat alternate in the Food-Based Menu Planning approach or menu item in the Nutrient Standard Menu Planning approach):

- Yogurt
- Meats – turkey, tuna, chicken, ham, etc.
- Meat salads
- Cheeses – grated, sticks, cubes, slices
- String cheese
- Cottage cheese
- Hard-cooked eggs
- Taco filling
- Nuts – almonds, walnuts, peanuts, pecans, etc.
- Nut butters – almond, peanut, sesame, etc.
- Toasted sunflower and sesame seeds
- Cooked dried peas and beans

Grain/Bread Items:

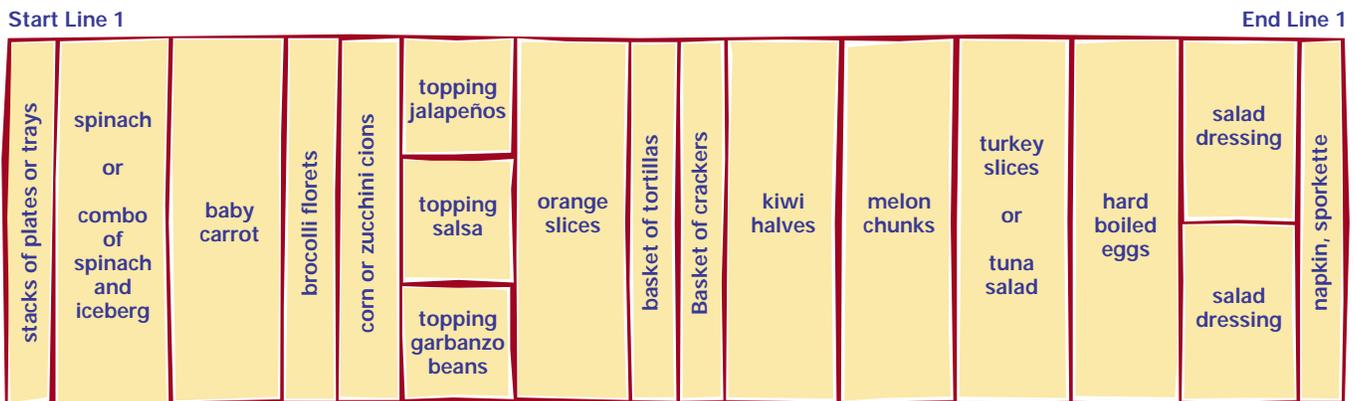
- Bread varieties, croutons, crackers, pita, tortillas, etc.
- Chow mein noodles
- Pasta and pasta salad
- Rice and rice salad

Other Items:

- Variety of salad dressings, lowfat and regular
- Pickles
- Olives – black and green
- Salsa
- Lowfat sour cream
- Guacamole
- Imitation bacon bits
- Flavored gelatin cubes
- Jalapeño peppers
- Pickled okra
- Soups, variety – This would create a soup and salad bar. Provisions must be made to keep the soup hot and off the cold area of the bar.

Sample salad bar set-ups #1 and #2 are designed for two portable salad bars. The flaps on each end are used and a combination of full pans, half long pans, half pans, and third pans are used to create an interesting layout.

Sample Salad Bar Set Up #1



Point of service (POS) must be at the end of the salad bar after all components have been offered.

You may use a table off to the side for dressing. If homemade, put on ice.

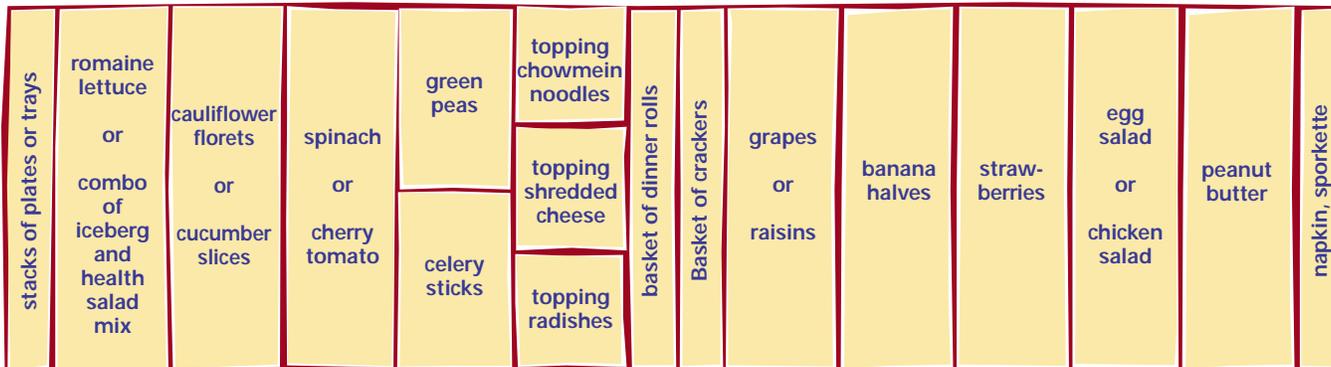
Place milk service at the end.

Salad Bars

Sample Salad Bar Set Up #2

Start Line 2

End Line 2



Point of service (POS) must be at the end of the salad bar after all components have been offered.

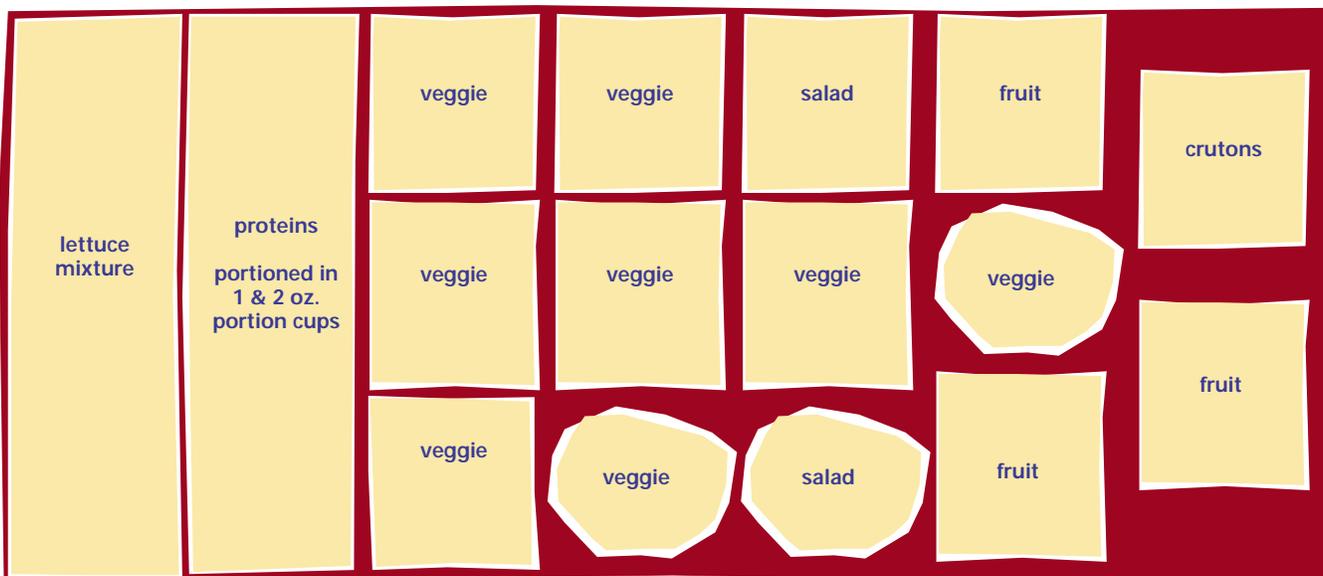
You may use a table off to the side for dressing. If homemade, put on ice.

Place milk service at the end.

Sample Salad Bar Set Up #3

Start Line 3

End Line 3



Salad Bar choices:

8 vegetables

3 fruits

2 cold salads

Croutons

Bread/roll/or crackers (2 pkg. = 1 bread)

Provide a minimum of 2 proteins each day

Serve on a 7" x 9" platter.

Salad dressings

can be school

made, or

commercial.

Please keep

school made

dressings on

ice.



Salad Bars

Salad Bar Options

Specialty bars can expand your cafeteria and make it a fun and ever-changing place for your customers to dine and increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables. Specialty bars can offer full reimbursable meals or components to them, as well as accompaniments to hot-food-line items such as burgers, tacos, pasta, or chili. Incorporate your own ideas and suggestions into the following bars, or design a whole new salad bar.

Theme Bars

Here are some possibilities for exciting theme bars taken from *Fresh-2-U The Florida Way*, recently developed by the Florida Departments of Education and Agriculture. Recipes and layout diagrams for all of these begin on page 33:

- Build a Better Burger Salad Bar
- Build a Bowl of Chili Salad Bar
- Greater Tater 'N' Salad Bar
- Pile a Pizza Salad Bar
- Plenty O' Pasta Salad Bar
- Stuff a Submarine Salad Bar
- Top a Taco Salad Bar



Garnishing

Customers eat with their eyes. Food in school cafeterias should be fresh and colorful, be presented attractively, and taste good. This will encourage students to try it.

Garnishing the salad bar will improve the appearance of the food and stimulate the desire for food. Garnishing helps draw attention to foods that students may not normally choose.



Salad Bars

Rules for garnishing the salad bar:

- Use inexpensive, easily and quickly prepared garnishes.
- Don't overgarnish.
- Use a garnish that will enhance the food.

Some suggestions for garnishing the salad bar:

- Fresh kale – This is popular because of its deep green color and durability. This can be used to trim the salad bar and fill up empty spaces. It can be washed and reused, and will last about 1 week.
- Replica kale – This is a plastic product that has the same appeal that the fresh kale has. It is more costly than the fresh product but can be washed and reused many times.
- Leaf lettuce, parsley, red or Napa cabbage – While these items are not as durable as kale, they can be used to trim the salad bar while offering color and eye appeal
- Baskets or arrangements of fresh fruits and vegetables enhance any salad bar.

TIP:

Your imagination is your only limit in making salad bars attractive and compelling. See the *Meal Appeal – Attracting Customers* booklet for ideas on enhancing your salad bar.

Nutrient Analysis

Salad bars can serve as the complete reimbursable lunch or as a food/menu item that is a part of a reimbursable meal. To conduct a nutrient analysis of the menus, as required by USDA's Healthy School Meals Initiative regulations, it is helpful to develop a standardized recipe for the salad bar. Consult your State agency for information on this procedure.

Staff Requirements

Factors to consider when planning for staffing of the salad bar are:

- the menu
- the number of students that participate
- the forms of food that are purchased and prepared, such as value added (pre-cut) lettuce versus bulk lettuce that needs processing
- kinds of equipment
- facility design and layout
- staff expertise and training

At a minimum, the number of staff should be two people to prepare the salad bar and two people (they can be the same people) to monitor the salad bar during the meal service. The number may increase based on the factors listed above.

In small schools with 350 or fewer students, one person should be able to handle salad bar responsibilities.

Designated employees must be trained to prepare the salad bar foods (washing, chopping, cutting, etc.), as well as to maintain and monitor the salad bar during meal service.





Duties and Responsibilities of Staff

Cashier

The cashier is stationed at the point of service (POS) to ensure an accurate count of students receiving reimbursable meals by using such counting methods as swiping computerized meal cards or collecting meal tickets. The POS must be located in a place after all the required meal components for the salad bar have been offered.

Responsibilities:

1. Counts meals served by category (Free, Reduced, or Paid).
2. Checks meal compliance to ensure students take the required number of food items for the food-based or the nutrient standard menu planning options.
3. Verifies that the portion size taken for the component is as planned.
4. Asks a student to return to the salad bar for additional food if the cashier identifies that the student's plate does not meet requirements.
5. May collect cash.

Replenisher or Monitor

Responsibilities:

1. Keeps the salad bar clean, and monitors food temperatures.
2. Replenishes items, never allowing any to run out.
3. Makes sure there is adequate backup of items before service begins, and knows the appropriate substitutions for foods on the salad bar.
4. Monitors how much food students are taking, and encourages students to take only what they will eat. This helps ensure no one is taking too much of any item, possibly causing a shortage of certain items.

Salad Bars

5. Encourages students to try a variety of menu items.
6. Makes sure all students are following safe food practices and proper salad bar etiquette, such as using serving utensils on the salad bar and not eating at the salad bar. (See Salad Bar Etiquette on page 6.)
7. Helps students make choices without slowing the service line.
8. Evaluates line speed, customer acceptance of food items, and service issues; and helps cafeteria manager develop solutions to barriers to a successful salad bar.

Volunteers (Parents and Students) and Non-Foodservice Staff

(only if allowed by school district policies)

ALL VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF MUST BE TRAINED IN FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION.

Suggested Responsibilities:

1. Keep the salad bar area neat and clean throughout service.
2. Inform replenishing person when supply of an item is getting low.
3. Assist younger students with plates and tableware.
4. Keep the lines on the salad bar organized.
5. Control the number of students allowed at the salad bar to prevent congestion.
6. Make sure all students are following safe food practices and proper salad bar etiquette, such as using serving utensils on the salad bar and not eating at the salad bar.
7. Help decorate the salad bar area with posters.





A good choice of counter for lower elementary grades might be a 28-inch model, plastic, nonrefrigerated, mobile, with folding detachable tray slides, and accessible from both sides.

Serving Counters, Equipment, and Utensils

When considering different types of salad bars, determine your needs. Consider the following in making your decisions:

- How much room do you have for the bar? It can be part of the regular serving line or be placed to the side. It can provide a reimbursable meal by itself.
- Where will you position the bar for optimal traffic flow and marketing? If it's part of the reimbursable serving line, placing it at the beginning will promote the fresh fruits and vegetables most successfully.
- Where will the equipment and cashier be for point-of-service count?
- Does it need electrical outlets (floor or drop-down from ceiling)?
- Will it have good lighting (important for showcasing fresh fruits and vegetables)?
- Can you procure other space for the bar or will you have to reposition your current equipment?
- Will you need to purchase an expandable bar for the future?
- Is refrigerated storage nearby?
- Do you need to move the bar from the floor into the kitchen each night?
- Are there multiple uses for the bar – breakfast, lunch, afterschool snacks, school events?
- Do you need a low bar, with the appropriate protective devices, for students in the lower elementary grades? The required height of the sneeze guard varies with the student population, which means that using the same equipment for high schools and elementary schools probably will not be possible.
- How many units do you need per school?
- How many students will choose the salad bar? Usually, during the startup phase of a salad bar it is very popular, but the participation rate may slow down later.

TIPS:

Finding space:

If you are using disposables, you can convert the dish room you are not using into a salad bar area. Or some of the à la carte space could be used for the salad bar.

Counters:

Consult with foodservice equipment vendors for variations in types and configurations.

Salad Bars

Traffic Flow

TRAFFIC FLOW is a key element to the success of your salad bar. There are three basic patterns:

- **Single Line:** This is an easy pattern to set up and is easy for the user. It can be placed against the wall.
- **Two-Sided Line:** This allows for faster service but has certain space and pattern flow restrictions. For faster service, place matching foods on either side of the bar.
- **Free-Standing:** The major advantage is that it can be placed in a prominent position away from the serving line and wall, which helps to spotlight it. This allows for many creative and dramatic displays. It can be a single line or two-sided bar. If a power source were needed, electrical lines would have to be dropped from the ceiling unless there is an appropriate outlet in the floor.

TIP:

- Use 6-inch-deep, full-size steam-table pans (12" x 20") as liner pans to hold ice if units are not refrigerated.
-

Equipment To Keep Foods Chilled

Three general methods for keeping foods chilled on the salad bar are:

- **Ice chilled:** This is the least costly but requires daily maintenance. Ice is placed in serving pans or other containers on the bar, and the food containers are placed in the ice. Ice should be the same depth as the food in the containers. The positive aspects are: 1) less expensive initial equipment and 2) the fresh appeal to customers of having food items displayed in ice. A major consideration is getting access to a sanitary source of ice. If this is not possible, then this type of salad bar should not be used.

TIPS:

- Showcase the salad bar by locating it near a high-traffic entrance.
- Place it in full view in a well-lighted area.
- Plan traffic patterns to prevent crossing meal lines for service or dish return.
- Provide traffic control by placing ropes, chains, or other methods to mark off areas for students to form lines.
- Provide clear, large, attractive signs to designate each food line.
- If the salad bar line offers a reimbursable meal, keep the register or computer close to ensure that an accurate point-of-service count of reimbursable meals can be taken.

- **Frost top:** This has refrigerated piping running underneath the top surface. This provides a more maintenance-free and cost-effective setup than the ice-chilled bar. However, spilled items will freeze and stick to the chilled surface. There must be access to an electrical outlet.
- **Chilled:** Items are kept cold by blowing air over a refrigerated coil in a compressor located in the bottom of the unit. This is the most costly type of salad bar to operate. Many of these units come in detachable sections, which can be removed and repositioned to create different salad bar displays. This type also needs access to an electrical outlet.

Utensils and Containers

Serving Utensils

Serving utensils include tongs, scoops, portion servers (solid or perforated measuring-serving spoons that are volume-standardized), and ladles. They are fairly dependable measures for portioning food by volume and for serving food quickly.



Always replace used serving utensils with clean, unused serving utensils when replenishing food. Have all spaces filled on the salad bar.

REMEMBER:

- Serving utensils should match their use.
- For items such as lettuce, use tongs; for items that need to be drained, such as beans and beets, use slotted measuring-serving spoons.
- Small dry ingredients, such as croutons and bacon bits, require a spoon.
- Pickles and fruit slices are best served with tongs.
- Always use long-handled utensils to prevent the utensils from sliding into the food.

Refer to Appendix page 78 for information on serving utensils. For additional information, refer to USDA'S *The Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, Revised 2000, pp. I-43 to I-45.



Salad Bars

Always use a new pan or container when you replace food. Never replenish food directly into the pan or container that is currently on the salad bar.

BE AWARE that students who receive free and reduced-price benefits can choose either size of salad without any extra cost.

Salad Bar Food Containers

Containers should be easy to remove and easy to clean. Some examples of food containers are:

- Steamtable pans with straight sides, either stainless steel or hard plastic. Full-size may be used, but the smaller 1/3 or 1/4 sizes are preferable because pans will be replaced more often. More foods can be offered on the salad bar, and the food will be fresher.
- Crocks
- Plastic food containers, such as round plastic bowls
- Wooden baskets for whole fresh fruit, breads, and individually packed items
- Salad dressing containers
- Specialty soup containers, such as kettles. Soups and other hot foods must not be kept on the salad bar (cold foods only) but rather held in a different area that will keep these foods hot.

Individual Serving Containers for Customers

There are many types of serving containers. These can be bowls or platters made of Styrofoam or plastic, as well as plastic dinner plates and cafeteria trays. Novelty containers, such as shakers and boats, are also available.

Providing two different sizes of plates or bowls at different prices will give options to the customers.

Food Safety and Sanitation

Food safety and sanitation must be the main emphasis when operating a salad bar. A salad bar should be clean, and contain safe food items, to attract and keep students' participation. A poorly maintained salad bar will cause students to avoid it.

Operating a safe and attractive salad bar begins with preparation and ends with cleanup and storage of ingredients.



Preparation

- Thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables with potable running water – never in standing water, because dirt and microorganisms that are rinsed off one item can then spread to the next.
- Designate special knives and cutting boards for cutting fresh fruits and vegetables only. Doing so helps prevent cross-contamination, which is the spread of germs from one item to another.
- Wear gloves or thoroughly wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds in warm water before handling salad bar items directly. If using gloves, make sure that you have not touched anything but the food items. Change gloves if you change activities or the gloves become soiled. **Remember, the gloves are to protect the food, not your hands.**
- Use proper cooking, cooling, and storage temperatures. Maintain temperatures for cold foods below 41 °F, and above 140 °F for hot foods. **KEEP COLD FOOD COLD AND HOT FOOD HOT.**



Setup

- Protect food on display with sneeze guards or food shields that meet the local health standards. Keep them clean. These shields should be about 14 to 18 inches above the food and in a direct line between the food and the mouth or nose of the customer. Always check what the correct height is for children.
- Use at least one long-handled serving utensil for each food item. Long handles prevent the utensil from slipping into the food items.
- If ice is used as the chilling medium, it must be produced in a sanitary ice machine. Use ice scoops to remove ice from the machine. Ice scoops must have long handles and be stored in a sanitizing solution between use.
- Set up the salad bar close to meal service time to prevent perishables from sitting out longer than necessary.
- Discourage tasting or grazing in the service line by identifying all foods on display. Label containers, post clear signs on the food shield, and write the names of salad dressings on the ladle handles or on dressing containers or dispensers. You can order ladles with the names of the salad dressings on the handles.
- Keep foods cold by not filling to the brim and storing to a depth of the ice.
- Keep dry condiments away from moist foods.
- On self-serve food bars, prepackaged fresh vegetables and fruits are more sanitary, with a reduced risk of cross-contamination from customers.



Salad Bars

Individuals working on the salad bar should wear hair restraints, clean aprons or smocks, and gloves.



Maintenance and Cleanup

- Individuals working on the salad bar should wear hair restraints, clean aprons or smocks, and gloves.
- Cover all food items on the salad bar before meal service begins and in between service if there is a long period of time between lunch periods.
- Do not let prepared items sit at room temperature; keep cold foods cold, and hot foods hot.
- Keep all perishable backup foods refrigerated. Do not bring them out until the supply on the salad bar needs replenishing.
- Properly cover, label, date, and refrigerate backup items so they can be used within the allowable time.
- Replenish often with containers of fresh ingredients. Do not add fresh food to the containers on the bar.
- Date stored food, and use First In, First Out (FIFO) to ensure the freshest quality.
- Immediately remove contaminated food from the salad bar. An example of how contamination can occur is when a child tastes food and returns this food to the container on the salad bar.
- Keep all surface areas clean. Employees should quickly clean up any spills.
- **Store wiping cloths in the proper sanitizing solution at the proper concentration at all times.** Discard sanitizing solution after optimal holding time. Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution and holding time.
- Monitor students to ensure they do not reach into food containers with their hands, drop handles of serving utensils into the food, taste food and return it to the serving containers, etc.
- At the end of the serving period, discard any unused potentially hazardous food items that were left on the salad bar and not prepackaged.
- Wash and sanitize the salad bar after each use.

Temperature Control

- The temperature range of 41 °F to 140 °F is called the “danger zone” because dangerous microorganisms can grow quickly in this temperature range, possibly resulting in serious foodborne illnesses.

Note:

The new Supplement to the FDA 2001 Food Code revises the hot holding temperature from 140 °F to 135 °F. “Fruits & Vegetables Galore” maintains the prior minimum standard of 140 °F for hot holding.

- The salad bar must maintain temperatures for cold foods below 41 °F and above 140 °F for hot foods . **KEEP COLD FOOD COLD AND HOT FOOD HOT.**
- Potentially hazardous foods, such as fresh-cut melons, must be kept out of the “temperature danger zone.”
- Check and record the temperatures of potentially hazardous foods (log) immediately upon removing from the refrigerator or cooler and before placing on the salad bar.
- It is recommended to check the temperatures every 30 minutes after these foods are placed on the salad bar.
- School Food Authorities should establish policies and procedures on how to handle food that is found to be within the danger zone (41 °F to 140 °F), based on local health inspection requirements.



Resources

- *Serving It Safe: A Manager's Tool Kit* is an excellent training resource on food safety and sanitation. It provides specific information such as temperature guidelines for safely receiving, storing, and preparing food, handling leftovers, etc.
- *Food Safety: It's In Your Hands*. This 2-hour satellite teleconference videotape addresses issues relating to food safety and the prevention of foodborne illness including identifying food safety hazards, avoiding cross-contamination, personal hygiene, and hand washing.
- *Food and Drug Administration Food Code*, 2001 Edition



The first two resources above are available from the National Food Service Management Institute. Contact the Institute at 800-321-3054 or visit the Web site at www.nfsmi.org to order these resources if you do not already have them.

Salad Bars

Record Keeping and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Compliance

Food Production Record for Salad Bars

If the salad bar is a separate serving line, the food production record must document that reimbursable meals were offered. Other pertinent information as required by regulations must be included. Contact your State agency for prototype forms. Also refer to the resource, *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*, to find examples of food production records. You may order a copy of this publication online from the Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn.

Compliance With NSLP Regulations

In order for salad bar meals to be reimbursable under the NSLP, they have to meet the same meal pattern requirements as other served meals. See pp. 63 to 66 for “Planning Menus and Serving Meals that Meet Meal Pattern Requirements.”



Suggestions to help the cashier recognize a reimbursable meal from a salad bar are:

- Plan consistent portions of similar foods.
- Know the planned portion sizes.
- Preportion some foods.
- Use portion control serving utensils.
- Display sample portions for students and cashier.
- If the salad bar is planned as the entrée, the menu planner must determine what is the portion size of the salad (entrée), such as 1 cup of salad.
- Educate students and adults.

In some schools, various sizes of plates or bowls are offered as options at different prices. BE AWARE that students who receive free and reduced-price meal benefits can choose either size salad without any extra cost. Meal counting procedures must ensure that there is no overt identification of these students.

Build Your Own Salad

An alternative to the typical self-serve salad bar is an option developed by Pinellas County, Florida, as part of a pilot project sponsored by the Produce for Better Health Foundation. Their “Build Your Own Salad” bar offers portioned choices that are individually packaged to ensure food safety but provide students a range of choices to build their own salad. Students have at least 4 choices each of 1/4-cup portioned vegetables and fruits (may choose any combination of 4), a portioned salad cup (may choose 1), 4 varieties of 1-oz. portioned proteins (may choose 2), bread, and milk.



Build Your Own Salad

Vegetable packages include broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, endive, mushrooms, onion, green pepper, radishes, spinach, romaine lettuce, squash, tomatoes, and zucchini.

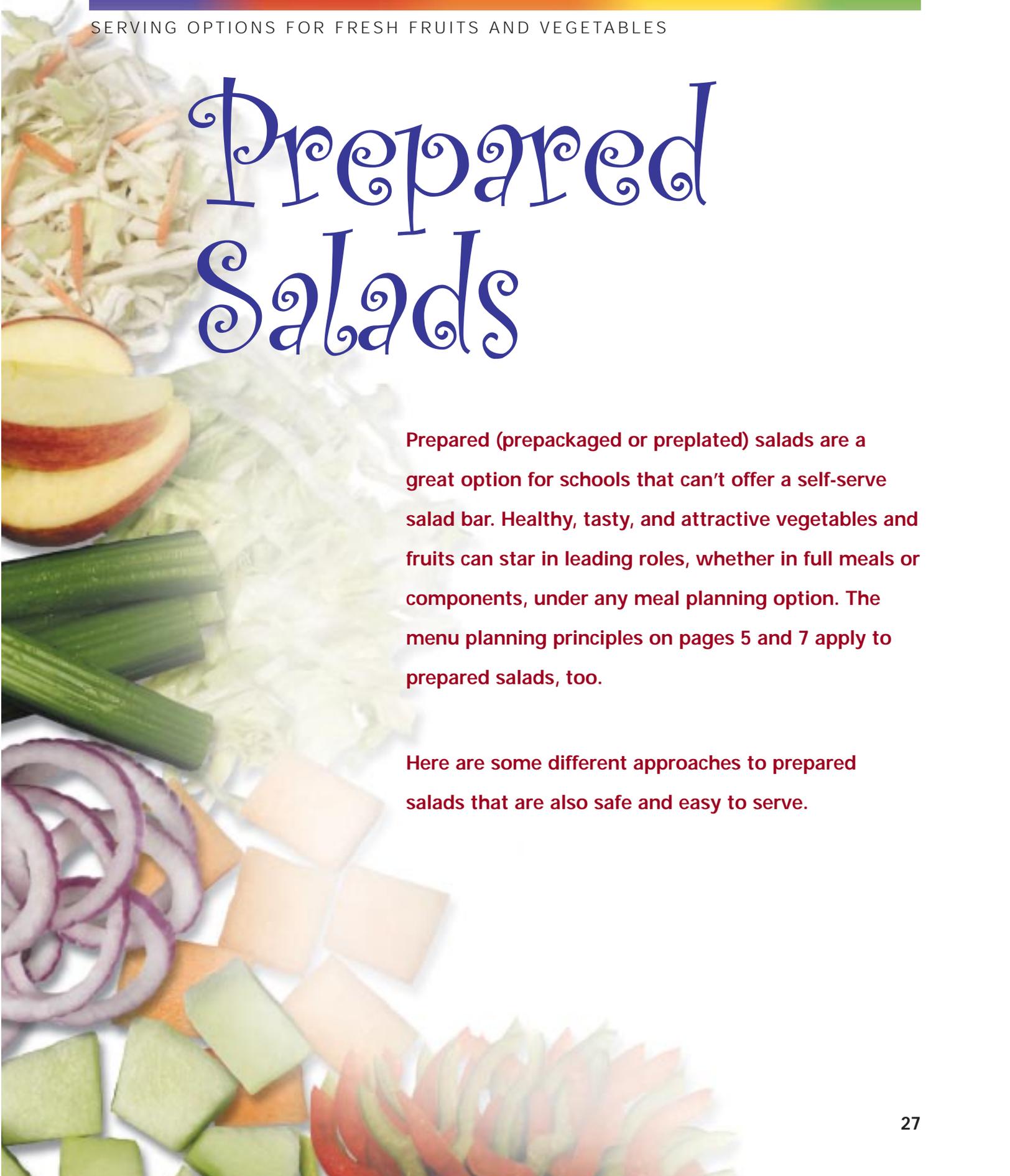
Fruit packages include fruits in season – apple, banana, pear, orange, peach, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, strawberries, grapes, watermelon, nectarine, commodity canned fruits, commodity frozen fruits, raisins, and trail mix.



Vegetables and fruits are prepared for the salad bar, weighed, and prepackaged into 1/4 cup servings. Pinellas County used 3- x 5-inch clear Ziploc bags for its pilot, but other packaging options are available. This option lets the students select the individual items they want in their salad while ensuring the safety and sanitation of those items. However, it is more labor intensive than the regular salad bar or prepared salads.

Presentation will make a big difference in selling prepackaged ingredients. Part of the challenge is to showcase the natural appeal of the fruits and vegetables, allowing the rich colors of each to shine through the packaging. Clear soufflé cups and clear tops are more transparent than plastic bags. Good lighting is a must. Dressing and garnishing the bar attractively will draw your customers' eyes and appetites. As with all fruits and vegetables, if "Build Your Own" salads are part of the reimbursable serving line, placing them at the beginning of the line will promote their selection.





Prepared Salads

Prepared (prepackaged or preplated) salads are a great option for schools that can't offer a self-serve salad bar. Healthy, tasty, and attractive vegetables and fruits can star in leading roles, whether in full meals or components, under any meal planning option. The menu planning principles on pages 5 and 7 apply to prepared salads, too.

Here are some different approaches to prepared salads that are also safe and easy to serve.

Prepared Salads



Salads-to-Go

A “salad-to-go” is a fresh prepackaged salad meal for a quick grab-and-go lunch. It is a full meal that helps customers in a hurry pick a well-balanced, lowfat item that, when combined with a bread and lowfat milk, provides a reimbursable meal for the Food-Based Menu Planning approach. These prepackaged salads can be the entrée or a side dish when using the Nutrient Standard Menu Planning approach. Salads-to-go can be offered outside the regular service line at a kiosk or at the *à la carte* window to better serve customers.

Here are some ideas for prepackaged salad meals. Recipes for the following begin on page 46:

- **Chef’s Salad-to-Go**
- **Spinach Salad-to-Go**
- **Chicken Taco Salad-to-Go**
- **Chicken Topper-to-Go**
- **Tuna Topper-to-Go**
- **Turkey Salad-to-Go**

Guidelines for salads-to-go:

- Use colored trays for salad or fruit soufflé cups or 2-inch clear steamtable pans in a refrigerated unit (single layer).
- Do not stack trays; place trays next to each other.
- Use plastic platters or bowls with lids for salads.
- Cut fresh cauliflower and broccoli into 1-inch florets.
- Cut fresh green, yellow, and red peppers into rings, not strips.
- Slice zucchini and yellow squash.
- Refrigerate vegetables after cutting.
- Place packets of salad dressing on the serving line in wicker baskets.

Prepared Salads

- Refrigerate salads-to-go and serve as an entrée, that includes 2 fruit/vegetable components and a meat/meat alternate (1 to 2 oz. as required); offer a bread serving (or 8 individual crackers) and milk to count as a reimbursable meal for the food-based menu planning option.
- Do not use lettuce that has turned brown or wilted.
- Do not use metal pans for service.
- When serving leftover cauliflower, trim brown spots.
- Peel carrots before cutting for salads.



Salad Shakers

A salad shaker is a fresh prepackaged salad meal where dressing can be added to the container and shaken together for a quick grab-and-go lunch. Salad shakers can be full reimbursable meals when enough meat/meat alternate is provided and when milk and bread are offered with the meal for food-based menu planning approaches. They are a quick and healthy alternative to a hot meal when students are in a hurry. They also reflect products your customers see in the restaurants they enjoy. Recipes for the following begin on page 51:

- **Greek Salad Shaker**
- **Chicken Caesar Salad Shaker**
- **Caesar Salad Shaker**
- **Oriental Chicken Salad Shaker**
- **Southwest Chicken Salad Shaker**

Guidelines for Salad Shakers

- Use clear, soft plastic 12 to 16-oz. cups with clear domed lids without holes.
- Place shakers upright in a refrigerated unit with the contents visible to customers.
- Wash and rinse vegetables before preparing salad shakers.
- Package with individual packets of salad dressing, or place the packets on the serving line in wicker or decorative baskets.



Prepared Salads

Fruit Salads-to-Go

Offering fresh fruits in an attractive and appealing manner will encourage your customers to choose a nutritious selection to accompany their main entrée.

- Use colored trays for fruit soufflé cups or a 2-inch steamtable pan in a refrigerated unit (single layer).
- Do not stack trays; place trays next to each other.
- Use 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups with lids for canned fruits. Use 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids for fresh fruit.
 - Use a colored tray for bananas.
 - Use a 3/8-cup measuring-serving spoon or #10 scoop (3/8 cup) for canned fruit. (See appendix page 78)
 - Serve apples, oranges, plums, and peaches whole, or 3/8 cup of grapes (approximately 14 seedless grapes).
 - Keep cut apples or bananas from turning brown by dipping in 1 cup of lemon or lime juice or pineapple juice (drained from canned pineapple).
 - For a colorful fruit alternative, place together a half apple and a half orange and serve in a soufflé cup. The orange prevents the apple from discoloring.
 - Do not use metal pans for serving fresh fruit.
- Try serving fresh whole fruits in a wicker basket for an attractive serving alternative.



Other Prepacked Salad Cups – Fruit, Vegetable, Meat/Meat Alternate, and Combination

- If smaller individual servings of fruits and vegetables are preferred to the meals-to-go, try alternatives such as fruit cups, vegetable cups, cottage cheese cups with fruits or vegetables, cheese cubes and fruit cups, yogurt and fruit cups, and other fruit and vegetable combinations for a new twist on getting your 5 A Day.
- Use 5-oz. clear plastic soufflé cups with lids to package individual fruit and vegetable servings.
- When offering more than one serving choice for fruits and vegetables, keep like-colored items separated. Instead, line different-colored items next to each other. For example, place strawberries next to pears or carrots next to celery.
- Do not place fruit cocktail next to pears – both have a yellow tint and minimize the attention given to each choice.
- Combining meat or meat alternates with fruits and/or vegetables offers customers fresh choices for breakfast, lunch, or an afterschool snack.



Prepared Salads

Garden Salads

A simple garden salad – without meat, egg, or cheese – can be a standard offering in your meal program. Stack them two-deep in a 4-inch pan on your regular line or on specialty lines. Offer 2-oz. portions of three different salad dressings in 2-1/2-oz. plastic soufflé cups stacked two-high in a 4-inch pan, or 2-oz. individual packets in three 1/3 pans. Garden salads must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.

Garden Salad-to-Go

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 cups lettuce | 2 small broccoli florets |
| 4 tomato wedges (use 1/2 tomato) | 3-4 carrot sticks |
| 2 slices cucumber | 1 pitted black olive |
| 1 radish, sliced | |

1. Place lettuce pieces in a 20-oz. clear plastic container with a lid.
2. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
3. Overlap two cucumber slices in the center of the container.
4. Arrange the radish slices on each side of the tomato wedges.
5. Place the two broccoli florets on the left and right side of the container.
6. Top with carrot sticks.
7. Place black olive in the center.

Specialty Bars

Examples of specialty bars are:

- Sandwich bars
- Salad and sandwich bars
- Salad and soup bars
- Salad, soup, and sandwich bars

Provide fresh fruits and vegetables, canned fruits, and preplated salads as choices on the specialty bars. Vegetable soups that are tasty and “chock-a-block” with vegetables should be “stars” when part of a specialty bar.



Fruits and vegetables can become featured items on an à la carte line. By using the many tips and suggestions throughout this publication, you can encourage your customers to purchase these fruits and vegetables.

Prepared Salads

Bag Lunches

Bag lunches may be used for field trips, picnics, or other special occasions. This is a way that your school cafeteria can meet your customers' needs even off campus.

- A reimbursable bag lunch may include a sandwich, milk, and two vegetable/fruit components.
- When refrigeration or coolers are available, serve a different sandwich on each occasion: ham and cheese, sliced turkey, cheese, submarine sandwiches, bunned hamburgers.
- When refrigeration or coolers are not available, prepare peanut butter triple-deckers or cheese sandwiches with individual packets of mustard and mayonnaise.
- Include carrot, celery, zucchini, and yellow squash sticks with individual packets of dressing; or fill sandwich bags or 4-oz. soufflé cups with chopped raw vegetables, perhaps broccoli or cauliflower, with individual packets of dressing.
- Serve a variety of fruits in season, juice, or bags of raisins.
- Milk must be offered to each student.
- For treats, serve cookies or peanuts in a bag.
- Condiments for sandwiches can include individual packets of mustard or mayonnaise, bags of three or four pickle slices, or a dill spear (1/6 of a pickle).
- For special occasions or trips, elementary students can decorate the bags in advance. A good nutrition education project might be for them to draw their favorite fruit and vegetable choices on their bags.
- Colorfully printed bags or boxes for lunches may be purchased as an alternative to the brown bag. A prize, such as school stickers or cafeteria coupons, can be included in the box or bag.



RECIPES FOR SALAD BARS AND PREPARED SALADS

Recipes

for Salad Bars and
Prepared Salads



Recipes-Theme Bars

Build a Better Burger Salad Bar



1. Provide customer with a *burger* for topping.
2. Vegetables such as green peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, and onions should be sliced for this salad bar.



| | | | | |
|---------|------------------------|------------------|------------|----------|
| lettuce | sliced green peppers | sliced mushrooms | carrots | dressing |
| | sliced green peppers | sliced tomatoes | pickles | dressing |
| | lowfat shredded cheese | sliced cucumbers | bacon bits | dressing |

Build a Bowl of Chili Salad Bar



1. Provide customer with a bowl of chili for topping.
2. Chop green peppers, onions, and tomatoes for this salad bar.



Recipes-Theme Bars

Greater Tater 'n' Salad Bar

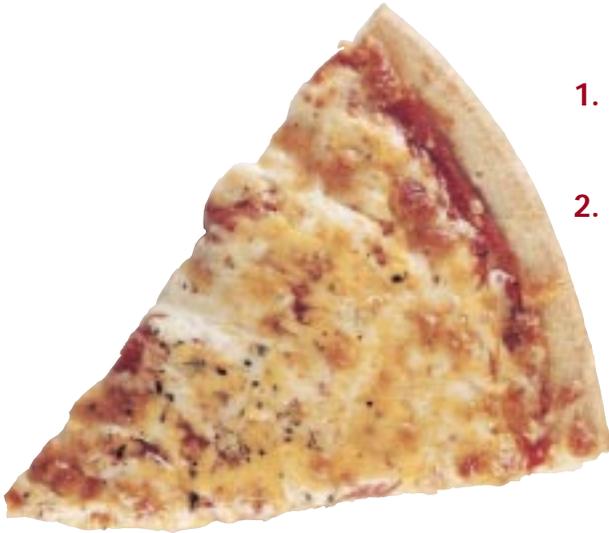
1. Provide customer with a *baked potato* for topping.
2. Chop fresh onions and tomatoes for this salad bar.
3. Lightly steam fresh broccoli florets.



| | | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------|
| lettuce | bacon bits | chopped onions | sliced mushrooms | dressing |
| | parmesan cheese | chopped tomatoes | lowfat shredded cheese | dressing |
| | kidney beans | lowfat sour cream | steamed broccoli | dressing |



Pile a Pizza Salad Bar



1. Provide customer with a slice of cheese pizza for topping
2. Chop fresh tomatoes and green peppers for this salad bar.



| | | | | |
|---------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|
| lettuce | chopped green peppers | chopped onions | corn relish | dressing |
| | coleslaw | chopped tomatoes | sliced mushrooms | dressing |
| | lowfat shredded cheese | taco chips | bacon bits | dressing |



Recipes-Theme Bars

Plenty O' Pasta Salad Bar



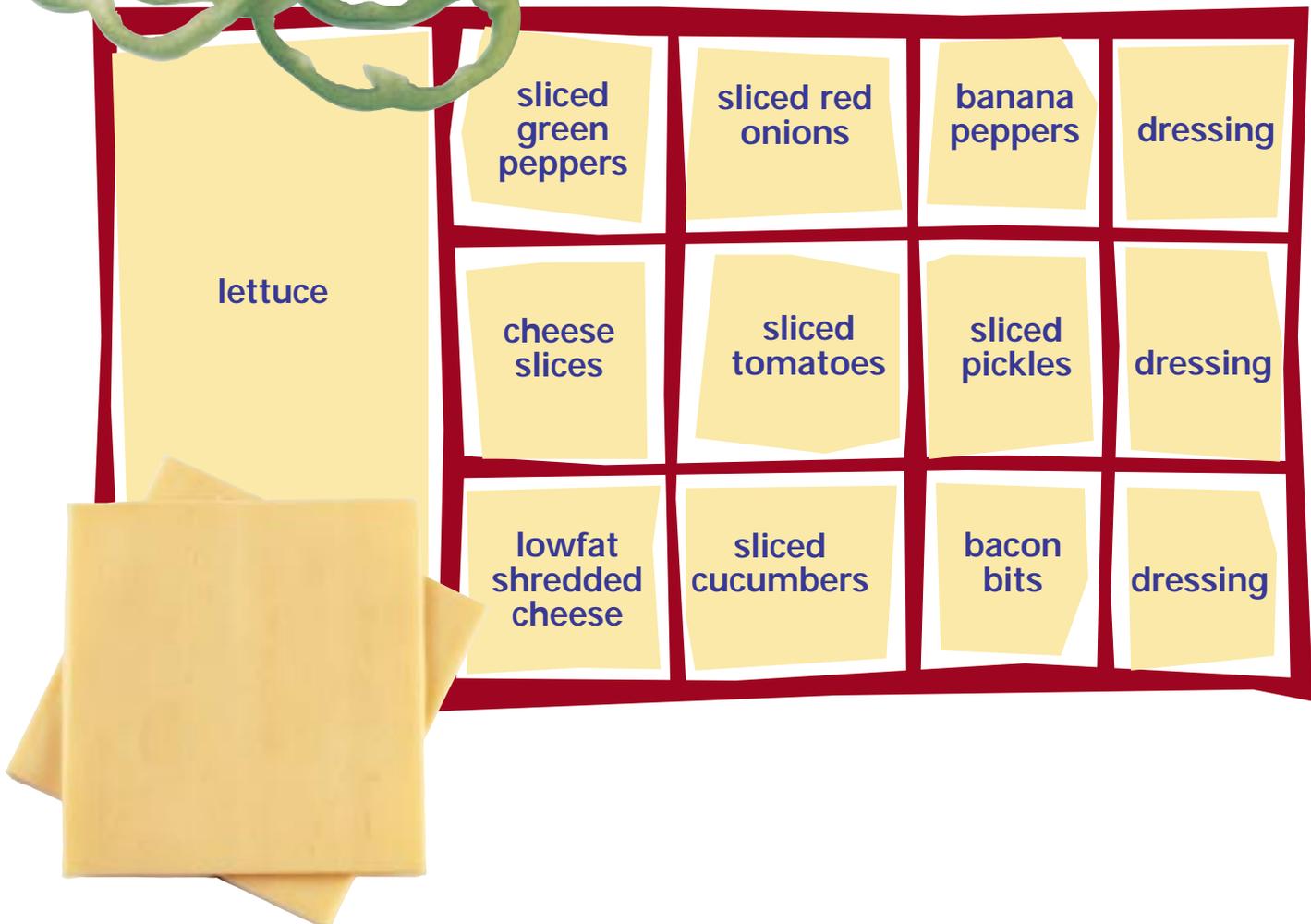
1. Provide customer with a bowl of pasta for topping.
2. Fresh vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, and zucchini should be served raw or very lightly steamed.

| | | | | |
|---------|------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------|
| lettuce | cherry tomatoes | chopped onions | broccoli | dressing |
| | carrots | peas | cauli-flower | dressing |
| | sliced mushrooms | lowfat shredded cheese | zucchini | dressing |



Stuff a Submarine Salad Bar

1. Provide customer with a submarine sandwich for topping.
2. Slice fresh green peppers, onions and tomatoes for this salad bar.



Recipes-Theme Bars

Top a Taco Salad Bar

1. Provide customer with a filled taco shell for topping.
2. Chop fresh onions and tomatoes for this salad bar.



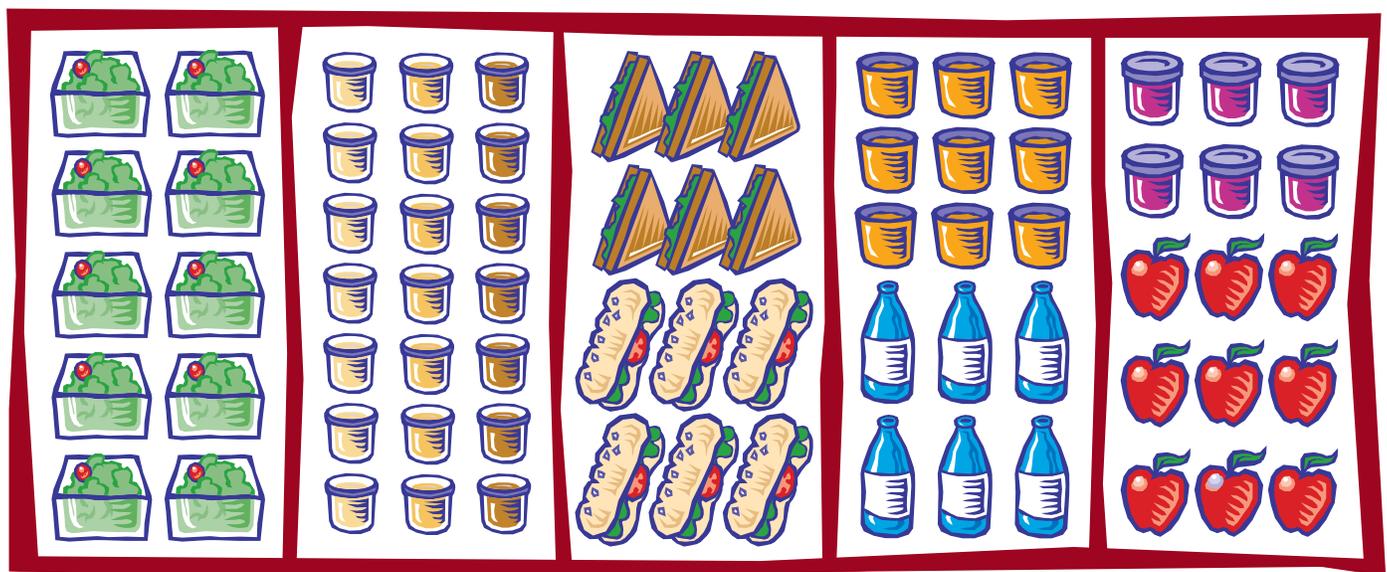
| | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|----------|
| lettuce | guacamole | chopped onions | bacon bits | dressing |
| | lowfat sour cream | chopped tomatoes | sliced mushrooms | dressing |
| | salsa | taco chips | lowfat shredded cheese | dressing |



À La Carte Bar

Guidelines for À la carte Bar

1. Stack garden salads two deep in a 4-inch pan.
2. Offer 2-oz. portions of three different salad dressings in 2-1/2-oz. soufflé cups with lids, stacked two deep in a 4-inch pan, or place individual portion packs in three 1/3 pans.
3. Wrap sandwiches and subs in clear plastic wrap or package in clear containers. Serve in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch pans.
4. Serve yogurt, mineral water, and fruit in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in a 2-inch pan.
5. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices.
6. Serve fresh fruit and canned fruit in 4-oz. soufflé cups with lids.
7. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch clear pans.
8. All foods must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.



Garden Salads

Three Dressings

Subs and Sandwiches

Yogurt and Fruit Juice

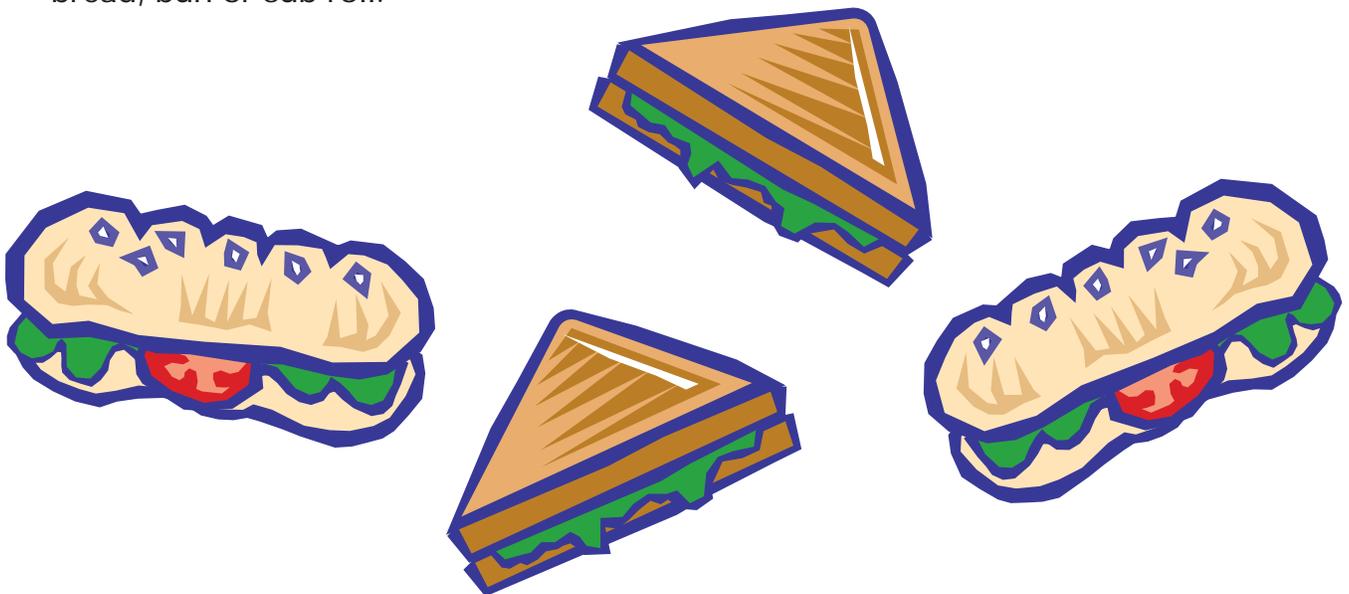
Canned and Fresh Fruit

Recipes—Theme Bars

Tips to Remember for Your Sandwich Bar

Sandwich Bars offer your customers a grab-and-go lunch with a variety of sandwich and fruit choices. Here are options for different types of sandwich bars to keep your customers happy.

1. Cut sandwiches diagonally, and stack halves together to show the contents.
2. Wrap cold sandwiches in clear plastic film to allow customers to see what they are purchasing.
3. Garnish sandwiches; use shredded lettuce and/or tomato slices and/or pickle slices on subs; and a lettuce leaf on loaf bread sandwiches.
4. Shave meats wafer thin, and mound on bread, bun or sub roll.
5. Display wrapped sandwiches in a 2-inch clear pan, 16 sandwiches per pan.
6. Sandwiches made with eggs, meat or cheese must be served in refrigerated units or over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners).
7. For variety, sandwiches may be pre-made on 2-foot-long French bread and sold in 2-inch cuts or larger. Sandwiches should be sliced when ordered—so the sandwich is “custom ordered.”



Sandwich Bar

Guidelines for Sandwich Bar

1. Wrap sandwiches and submarines in clear plastic wrap, or package in clear containers. Serve sandwiches in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in pans.
2. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices daily.
3. Serve canned fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups with lids.
4. Serve fresh fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids.
5. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch clear pans.
6. All food must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.



Sandwiches

Subs

Canned Fruit

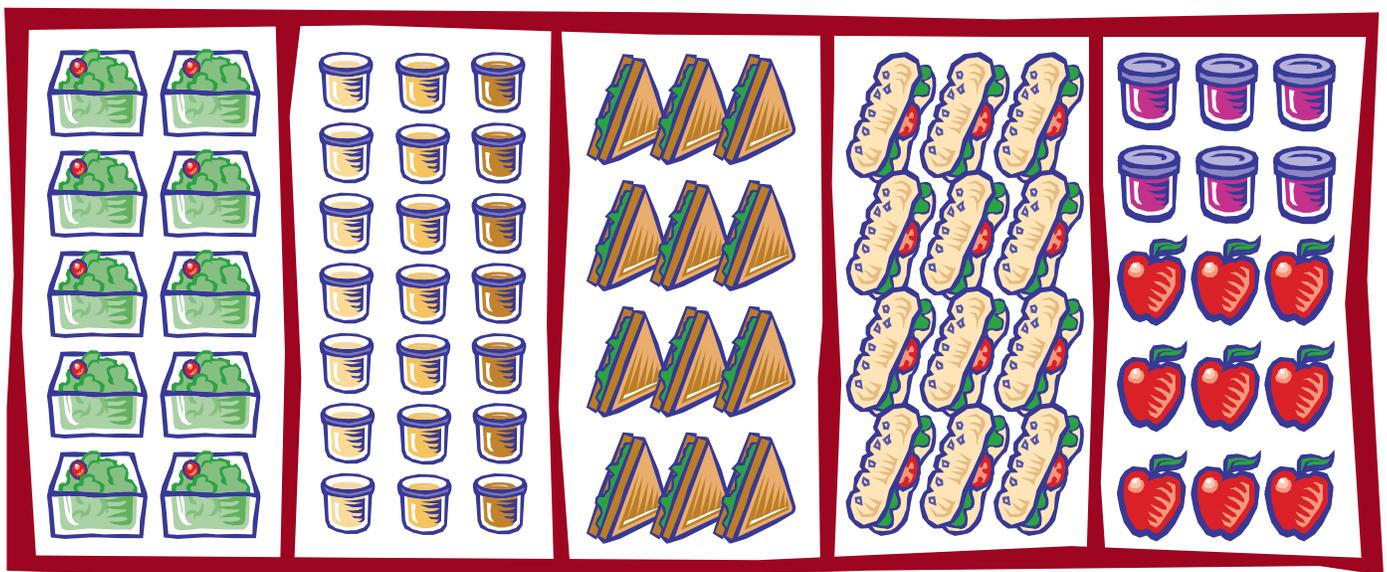
Fresh Fruit

Recipes—Theme Bars

Salad & Sandwich Bar

Guidelines for Salad & Sandwich Bar

1. Stack garden salads two deep in a 4-inch pan.
2. Offer 2-oz. portions of three different salad dressings in 2-1/2-oz. soufflé cups with lids. Stack two deep in a 4-inch pan or place individual portion packs in three 1/3 pans.
3. Wrap sandwiches and subs in clear plastic wrap, or package in clear containers. Serve in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch pans.
4. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices.
5. Serve canned fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids.
6. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch pan.
7. All food must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.



Garden Salads

Dressings

Sandwiches

Subs

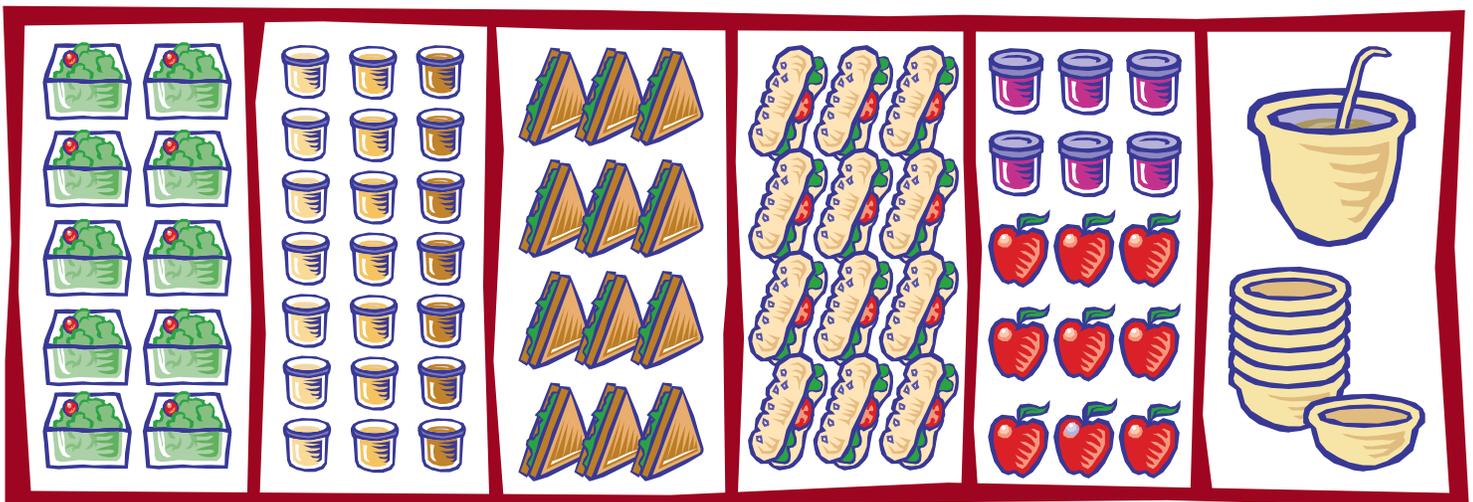
Canned and Fresh Fruit

Soup, Sandwich, & Salad Bar

Guidelines for Soup, Sandwich, & Salad Bar

1. Follow guidelines for Sandwich Bar or Salad & Sandwich Bar.
2. Use an 8-oz. ladle to serve soup. Add one can of water to each #3 can (51 oz.) of soup.
3. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices.
4. Serve canned fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cup with lids.
5. Serve fresh fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids.
6. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in a 2-inch clear pan.

For 8 oz. of soup to contain the required 1/4 cup vegetables, the following soups require the addition of 3 cups of vegetables to each #3 can (51 oz.) nonvegetable reconstituted soup:
Chicken Gumbo, Chicken Noodle, Chicken with Rice, New England Clam Chowder, Cream of Celery, Cream of Chicken, and Cream of Mushroom.



Garden Salads

Dressings

Sandwiches

Subs

Canned and Fresh Fruit

Soup Table

Recipes—Salads-to-Go



Chef's Salad-to-Go

- 2 cups lettuce
 - 4 tomato wedges (use 1/2 tomato)
 - 4 slices cucumber
 - 1 radish, sliced
 - 2 small broccoli florets
 - 2/3 oz. ham (cut in 3" long 1/2" wide julienne strips)
 - 2/3 oz. turkey (cut in 3" long 1/2" wide julienne strips)
 - 2/3 oz. cheese (cut in 3" long 1/2" wide julienne strips)
 - 1 pitted black olive
1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
 2. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
 3. Overlap two cucumber slices at the top of the container and the bottom.
 4. Arrange radish slices on each side of the tomato wedges.
 5. Place two broccoli florets on the left and right sides of the container.
 6. Top with strips of ham, turkey, and cheese arranged diagonally in the center.
 7. Place black olive in the center of the meat strips.



Spinach Salad-to-Go

- 2 cups spinach
 - 1 hard-boiled egg, quartered
 - 3/4 oz. slices of rolled ham
 - 1/2 oz. cheese in 3-inch julienne strips
 - 1 mushroom, sliced
 - 2 cherry tomatoes
1. Place spinach pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
 2. Place an egg wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
 3. Place one ham roll diagonally in the center.
 4. Place cheese strips diagonally on each side of the ham.
 5. Arrange mushroom slices on the spinach.
 6. Place a cherry tomato on each side of the container.

Recipes—Salads-to-Go



Chicken Taco Salad-to-Go

- 2 cups lettuce
 - tortilla chips
 - 1/4 cup kidney beans (1/2 oz. protein)
 - 1/2 oz. shredded cheddar
 - 1 oz. pulled chicken pieces
 - 1/2 tomato, diced
 - 1 oz. salsa in a soufflé cup
1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
 2. Spread tortilla chips on top.
 3. Top with kidney beans.
 4. Top with shredded cheddar.
 5. Top with pulled chicken.
 6. Top with diced tomato.
 7. Place a soufflé cup with salsa in the center.

Layer in this order:

1. Lettuce
2. Tortilla Chips
3. Kidney Beans
4. Shredded Cheese
5. Pulled Chicken
6. Diced Tomato



Chicken Topper-to-Go

- 2 cups lettuce
 - 1 #8 scoop chicken salad
 - 4 tomato wedges (1/2 tomato)
 - 1 green pepper ring (cut in half)
 - 1 radish, sliced
 - 2 small broccoli florets
1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
 2. Place a #8 scoop of chicken salad in the center.
 3. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
 4. Place a half of a green pepper ring on each side of the chicken salad.
 5. Arrange sliced radishes on the lettuce.
 6. Place the broccoli florets on the left and right sides of the container.

Recipes—Salads-to-Go



Tuna Topper-to-Go

- 2 cups lettuce
 - 1 #8 scoop tuna salad
 - 4 tomato wedges (1/2 tomato)
 - 1 green pepper ring (cut in half)
 - 1 radish, sliced
 - 2 small broccoli florets
1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
 2. Place a #8 scoop of tuna salad in the center.
 3. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
 4. Place a half of a green pepper ring on each side of the tuna salad.
 5. Arrange sliced radishes on the lettuce.
 6. Place the broccoli florets on the left and right sides of the container.



Turkey Salad-to-Go

- 2 cups lettuce
 - 3/4 oz. turkey (2 rolled slices or equivalent shredded turkey)
 - 1/2 oz. cheese in 3-inch julienne strips
 - 4 tomato wedges
 - 1 radish, sliced
 - 2 cucumber slices
 - 2 small broccoli florets
 - 1 pitted black olive
1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
 2. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
 3. Place turkey diagonally in the center.
 4. Place cheese strips diagonally in the center.
 5. Arrange radish slices on each side of the tomato wedges.
 6. Place a cucumber slice on the left and right sides of the container.
 7. Place a broccoli floret on top of each cucumber slice.
 8. Place a black olive in the center of the turkey.

Recipes—Salads-to-Go

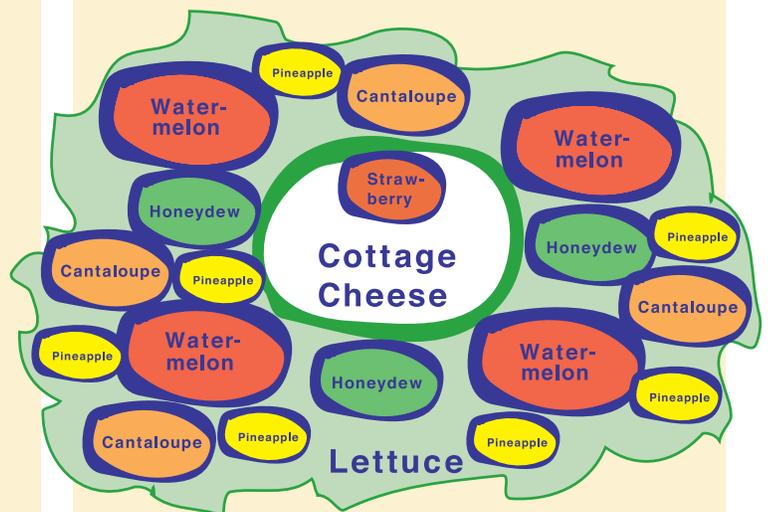
Checklist for Salads-to-Go

American Cheese
Black Olives
Broccoli
Cantaloupe
Carrots
Celery
Cheddar Cheese
Cherry Tomatoes
Cottage Cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Green Pepper
Honeydew
Kidney Beans
Lettuce
Mayonnaise
Mushrooms
Onions
Pickle Relish
Pineapple Chunks
Pulled Chicken
Pullman Ham
Radishes
Salsa
Spinach
Strawberries
Tomato
Tortilla Chips
Tuna
Turkey Roll
Watermelon

The Fruit Salad Bowl-to-Go

- 1/2 cup (#8 scoop) lowfat cottage cheese in a 4-oz. plastic soufflé cup
- 1 cup lettuce
- 4-5 1-inch chunks of cantaloupe
- 4-5 1-inch chunks of honeydew
- 4-5 1-inch chunks of watermelon
- 4-5 1-inch chunks of pineapple
- 1 strawberry with stem

1. Place cottage cheese in a soufflé cup in the center of the container.
2. Place lettuce pieces around the cottage cheese cup.
3. Place fruit on lettuce.
4. Place strawberry in the center of the cottage cheese.



Recipes—Salads-To-Go

Fresh 2 U Tips to Remember for Your Fruit Salads-To-Go

Offering fresh fruits in an attractive and appetizing manner will encourage your customers to choose a nutritious selection to accompany their main entree.

1. Use colored trays for fruit soufflé cups or a two-inch steam table pan in a refrigerated unit (single layer).
2. Do not stack trays; place only one tray at a time.
3. Use 4 oz. plastic soufflé cups with lids for canned fruits. Use 4 oz. unlined plastic soufflé cups for fresh fruit.
4. Use a colored tray for bananas.
5. Use a 3/8 cup spoodle or #10 scoop (3/8 cup) for canned fruit.
6. Wash fresh fruits in dish machine in a silverware rack with no heat or soap.
7. Serve apples, oranges, plums and peaches whole, or 3/8 cup of grapes (approx. 14 seedless grapes).
8. Keep cut apples or bananas from turning brown by dipping in one cup of lemon or lime juice or pineapple juice (drained) from canned pineapple.
9. For a colorful fruit alternative, place together a half apple and a half orange and serve in a soufflé cup. The orange prevents the apple from discoloring.
10. Don't use metal pans for serving fresh fruit.
11. Try serving fresh whole fruits in a wicker basket for an attractive serving alternative.



Fresh 2 U Salad Shakers

Salad shakers are a fresh pre-packaged salad meal where dressing can be added to the container and shaken together for a quick grab-and-go lunch. Salad shakers can be full reimbursable meals when enough meat/meat alternate is provided and when milk and bread are offered with the meal. They provide a quick and healthy alternative to a hot meal when students are in a hurry.

Fresh 2 U Vegetable Tips for Your Salad Shakers

1. Use clear soft plastic 12-16 ounce cups with clear domed lids without holes.
2. Place shakers upright in a refrigerated unit with the contents visible to customers.
3. Wash and rinse vegetables before preparing salad shakers.
4. Package with small individual packets of salad dressings or place individual packets on the serving line in wicker or decorative baskets.
5. Refrigerate salad shakers and serve as an entrée, including two fruit/vegetable components and 2-3 ounces meat/meat alternate component; offer milk and a bread serving (8 individual crackers or 1/2 cup croutons) for a reimbursable meal.

Greek Salad Shaker

- 1 1/2 cup salad lettuce mix
- 2 ounces Feta cheese
- 1/8 cup diced tomatoes
- 1/8 cup black or Greek olives
- 2 fresh red onion rings
- 1/4 cup croutons
- 1 package Vinaigrette dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add Feta cheese, diced tomatoes, olives, red onion rings, and croutons.
3. Place individual packet of Vinaigrette dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Recipes—Salads Shakers



Chicken Caesar Salad Shaker

- 1 1/2 cup romaine lettuce
 - 2 ounces diced cooked chicken
 - 1 ounce grated Parmesan cheese
 - 1/8 cup diced tomatoes
 - 1/4 cup croutons
 - 1 package Caesar dressing
1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
 2. Add diced cooked chicken, diced tomatoes, grated Parmesan cheese, and croutons.
 3. Place individual packet of Caesar dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Caesar Salad Shaker

- 1 1/2 cup romaine lettuce
 - 2 ounces grated Parmesan cheese
 - 1/8 cup diced tomatoes
 - 1/4 cup croutons
 - 1 package Caesar dressing
1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
 2. Add diced tomatoes, grated Parmesan cheese, and croutons.
 3. Place individual packet of Caesar dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Recipes—Salads Shakers

Oriental Chicken Salad Shaker

- 1 1/2 cup salad lettuce mix
- 2 ounces diced cooked chicken
- 1/8 cup mandarin oranges
- 1/4 cup Chinese noodles
- 1/8 cup diced chives
- 1 package Oriental dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add diced cooked chicken, mandarin oranges, Chinese noodles, and chives.
3. Place individual packet of Oriental dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.



Southwest Chicken Salad Shaker

- 1 1/2 cup romaine lettuce
- 2 ounces diced cooked chicken
- 1/8 cup diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup black or garbonzo beans
- 2 tablespoon corn relish
- 1/4 cup sliced tortilla strips
- 1 package Southwest dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add diced cooked chicken, diced tomatoes, beans, corn relish, and tortilla strips.
3. Place individual packet of Southwest dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Corn Relish

- 1 #10 can corn, drained
- 2 tomatoes, whole, diced
- 1 onion, large, diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1 cucumber, diced
- 5 celery stalks, diced
- 1 tablespoon celery seed
- taste salt and pepper
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1-1/2 cups vinegar

Directions: Mix ingredients with vinegar and oil, chill and serve.

Yield: 30 3/8 cup servings.

Recipes—Other Sources



Other Resources

Other recipes for salad bar items – standardized to help you maintain quality and consistency – are available in the following USDA publications:

- ***Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals:*** Download this resource from USDA's Team Nutrition Web site at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Training/train.html>; or send a request to teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov, or call Team Nutrition at 703-305-1624.
- ***School Lunch Challenge Recipes:*** Download the recipes from USDA's Team Nutrition Healthy School Meals Resource System Web site at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Chef/recipechallenges.html>.
- ***Quantity Recipes for School Food Service:*** Purchase by calling the National Food Service Management Institute at 1-800-321-3054.

Quality, Quality, Quality!

A quality product at the end of preparation does not guarantee a quality product on the plate. Careful attention to quality and safety procedures during serving ensures an end-product that your customers will want to eat and can enjoy safely.



Quality, Quality, Quality!

Quality Down the Line and On the Line

Once your school accepts a food product that fulfills the established specifications, it is up to you to maintain its quality and safety.



Now the stage is set for you, the School Foodservice Staff, to handle each step of the process with impeccable standards, practices, and procedures in order to preserve, present, and serve a quality meal your customers can safely enjoy.

Your task to “seal in” quality and safety and to creatively present nutritious meals that customers like and want more of is a tall order! To entice students to try food brings your creativity to a whole new level-- thinking “outside the pan” if you will.

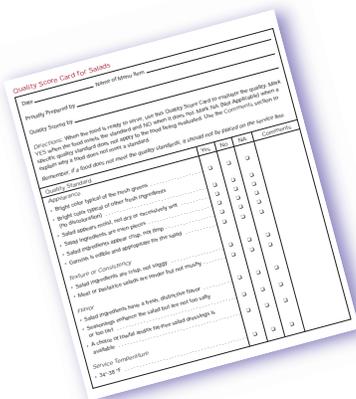
For best quality and safety:

- Keep certain fresh fruits and vegetables that are considered potentially hazardous foods, such as fresh-cut melons, below 41 °F.
- Serve only ingredients that are clean, drained, chilled, and crisp.
- ALWAYS evaluate salad items and prepared salads before placing on the serving line to ensure that the foods are tasty, attractive, and have been held at the correct temperatures. Evaluation standards could include:
 - Color should be bright with no discoloring due to overripeness.
 - Skins should be shiny.
 - Skins should be free of bruises, blemishes, and spots.
 - Product should not be shriveled, slimy, or moldy.
 - Flesh should feel firm to the touch, not mushy or hard.
 - Leaves on leafy items should be crisp, not mushy or brown.
 - Food items should have a fresh aroma, no sour or unpleasant odors.

See Appendix pages 74 and 75 for evaluation scorecards for salads, fresh fruits, and fresh fruit menu items.

If the food does NOT meet the quality standards, you should do the following:

- Substitute another food item on the service line. Follow the school district’s policy on substitutions.
- If the product does not meet quality standards for fresh service, trimming may make it acceptable for use in a cooked product such as soup, to avoid waste.
- Determine the cause of the poor quality, and put procedures in place to avoid or correct the problem.



QUALITY OF FOOD AND QUALITY OF SERVICE

Receiving, Storage, and Preparation



Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

Receiving and Storing Fresh Produce

Checking Delivery Temperature

Fresh produce should be delivered to the school in enclosed refrigerated trucks. Refrigerated produce should have an internal temperature of 33 to 41 °F. These requirements should be included in the purchasing specifications.

Take the temperature between the refrigerated produce bags or cases when they are received. The temperature of the packages is critical to quality because the produce is ready for use.

TIP: Refer to *Quality Food for Quality Meals* for more information on receiving and storage.

- Use a stem-type thermometer to be sure the temperature is 41 °F or below. If the temperature probe damages the product, use that package first.
- If the temperature of the product is too low or too high, follow the school district's procedure for receiving and rejecting produce.

Storing Fresh Produce

- Date produce upon receiving and note "Best if Used By" date to ensure First-In, First-Out (FIFO).
- Upon delivery, immediately store the bags in the coldest part of the refrigerator or cooler. Fresh-cut produce loses half its shelf life when it is stored above 40 °F.
- For maximum quality, store refrigerated produce between 34-36 °F with a relative humidity between 85 and 90 percent. **DO NOT FREEZE.**
- Provide good air circulation around produce. Precut produce requires special handling.
- Precut produce should be purchased in quantities that can be used within 5 school days in order to remain at the peak of quality.
- Do not remove the bags from the refrigerator until it is time to prepare the salad. Precut produce is packaged in air-controlled bags to ensure quality and freshness.
- Once the seal on the precut produce bag has been broken, the product should be used as quickly as possible.

Store nonrefrigerated produce such as bananas, tomatoes, and potatoes at room temperature.



Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

Preparing Salad Items

Quality Salad Preparation:

1. Prepare all salads according to a standardized recipe. The manager uses a recipe to determine what ingredients will be included in a salad and then provides that information to the person preparing the salad.
2. Keep all salad ingredients chilled in the refrigerator until time for preparation. Refrigerate fresh greens for several hours to develop crispness.
3. Before preparing, all fresh produce should be washed thoroughly under cold running tap water to remove any lingering dirt. Scrub firm produce, such as apples and potatoes, with a brush. Do not wash with detergent or soap because these could produce residues a person could absorb when eating. Washing is still recommended for pre-cleaned, trimmed produce. **Do not soak fresh produce because important nutrients can be lost in the water.**
4. Cut fresh produce in large pieces to help minimize the loss of nutrients.
 - For salad ingredients prepared in large quantities, use:
 - Vertical cutter mixer or VCM
 - Commercial food processor or chopper
 - Cutter/slicer attachment of the mixer
 - Slicer
 - For salad ingredients prepared in small quantities, use:
 - Sharp knife
 - Designated cutting board
5. Some fruits turn brown when the cut surface is exposed to air. These include apples, avocados, bananas, pears, and peaches. They should be cut with a sharp, stainless steel knife and then dropped into pineapple, orange, or diluted lemon juice. A variety of commercial products can also be used to prevent browning. See the included "Culinary Techniques" CD-ROM for a fun training activity.
6. Utensils, equipment, and work surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water, and then sanitized, between jobs. Sanitize with 2 fluid ounces (4 table-spoons) of regular household chlorine bleach to 1 gallon of water. This solution is good only for up to 2 hours. Store wiping cloth in the sanitizing solution between cleaning.



Correct Way to Clean Salad Greens:

- Wash as close as possible to meal service.
- Strip away any outer leaves that may seem coarse and unsuitable for final presentation.
- For iceberg lettuce, remove the core before you clean it. To remove the core, firmly strike the core of the head of lettuce on a hard surface, then remove the core whole.



Receiving, Storage, and Preparation



- Wash head of lettuce by running water in the hollow left by the core. Do not soak heads of lettuce since the leaves absorb water. Place in a colander to drain with the core down. Remove the leaves and stack or nest six to seven leaves to a pile.
- For salad greens with loose leaves, separate the leaves and wash under cool running water. Do not soak.
- Drain all salad ingredients thoroughly so no water collects in the bottom of the storage container.
- Store all washed salad greens in plastic bags or plastic containers with a fitted cover.

Kitchen and Cafeteria Considerations

Preparation Areas and Equipment – What Do I Need to Process Fresh Fruits and Vegetables?

When designing your preparation area and identifying your equipment needs, consider these factors:



- *Can the staff transfer fresh fruits and vegetables from the receiving point to the serving point as efficiently as possible?*
- *Does the design enhance employee productivity and safety?*
- *Can the staff provide a quality and safe product to be served to the customer?*

The menu and various forms of produce that are purchased determine the designated preparation area and preparation equipment for a facility. In the past, all fresh produce had to be cleaned, peeled, and trimmed in the facility. Today, however, much fresh produce is purchased already cleaned, trimmed, and, in some instances, preportioned. This allows for a smaller preparation area and less equipment.

The following are suggestions for preparation areas and equipment. Your needs will vary depending on the kinds and forms of fresh fruits and vegetables you receive.

Location of Preparation Areas:

Fresh unprocessed fruits and vegetables: prepare near the receiving area, storage rooms, and refrigerators.

Salads: prepare near the refrigerators for the serving lines.

Preparation Equipment:

- Preparation sink - A separate two-compartment sink is recommended to clean and prepare fresh produce. The sink should be NSF approved or equivalent. The NSF mark certifies that the product has met specific safety standards established by the National Sanitation Foundation.

Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

- Food waste disposer or space for a garbage can
- Reach-in refrigerator or walk-in cooler
- Worktables, preferably stainless steel
- Mobile cart
- Chopper and cutter
- Knives
- Peeler, electric or hand, if needed
- Cutting boards, color-coded for specific use
- Thermometers and temperature logs for coolers and produce
- Disposable plastic gloves



Central Kitchen -- What Do I Consider When Serving Fresh Fruits and Vegetables from a Central Location?

Preparation areas and equipment needs may vary when you are transporting meals from a central kitchen to satellite kitchens. A central kitchen is used to receive and store food orders and prepare meals. The prepared meals are transported to the satellite or receiving kitchens. However, a limited amount of food preparation may be done at the satellite kitchen. In addition, vendors may deliver some foods, such as fresh produce, to the satellite kitchen. Answer the following questions to help you decide how much fresh produce can be received and/or prepared at the central and satellite kitchens:

- *Do the purchasing specifications require a certain degree of ripeness to allow for storage at the central kitchen and then transportation to the receiving kitchens?*
- *Does the central kitchen have adequate refrigerated storage space for holding fresh fruits and vegetables prior to transporting to satellite or receiving kitchens?*
- *Is there a trained person to evaluate the quality and condition of fresh produce when it is delivered to the central kitchen or to the satellite or receiving kitchens?*
- *Will all of the fresh produce be delivered directly to the central kitchen?*
- *Will some or all of the fresh produce be delivered directly to the receiving kitchens?*
- *How much preparation will be done at the central kitchen?*
- *How much preparation or assembly of the meal will be done at the satellite or receiving kitchens?*
- *Do the satellite or receiving kitchens have the equipment and labor to “prep” the fresh fruits and vegetables?*

Whether the decision is to receive, store, and prepare all or some of the fresh fruits and vegetables at the central kitchen or at the receiving kitchens, school districts must have procedures that ensure only safe, quality products are served to students.

Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

Refrigerated Storage – What Will I Need to Keep Fresh Fruits and Vegetables at Optimal Quality?

Basically, to store fresh fruits and vegetables, you need a refrigerated storage area and a cool storage area. The amount of storage you need depends on your menu, the number of meals you prepare, and the amount and the forms of produce you order.

Cold Storage – Lower than 41 °F

Types of refrigerators include walk-in, reach-in, and pass-through.

- **Walk-in refrigerators** should be located near the receiving areas. Fresh fruits and vegetables that require cold storage can be placed here immediately upon delivery.
- **Reach-in refrigerators** are ideal in the preparation area for fresh fruits and vegetables. The fresh produce can be stored here during and after preparation to ensure quality and safety of the food items.
- **Pass-through refrigerators** are usually located in back of the serving line and are convenient to store prepared food items and allow cafeteria staff to replenish the serving lines easily from the kitchen. This ensures that fresh produce is refrigerated at all times.

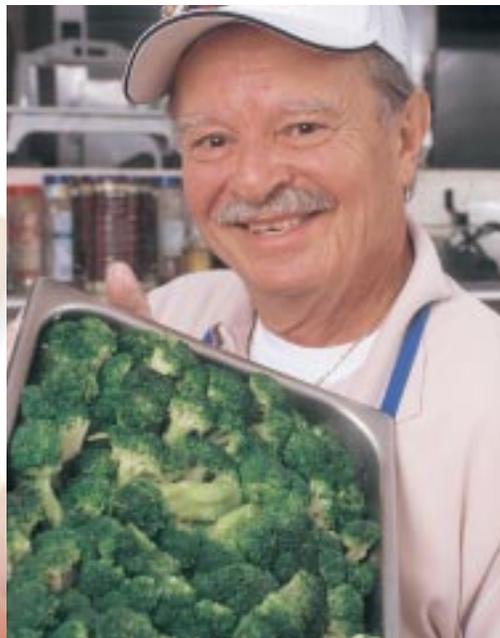
You can select solid metal doors, glass doors, or a combination of the two. Generally, refrigerators with glass doors are used on the serving lines to showcase the food items, such as prepared salads.

Cool Dry Storage – 60 to 70 °F

A cool storage room or area should be used to store produce such as bananas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, potatoes, and dry onions. It should be a dark, dry, and well-ventilated area. Produce must be stored at least 6 inches off the floor for proper ventilation. As with refrigerators, cool storage temperatures should be monitored several times a day and documented in a temperature logbook.

Preparing and Serving Vegetables and Fruits

Preparation and presentation are just as important for prepared vegetables and fruits as they are for fresh produce. Attracting students' attention to select and consume these items is your goal.



Preparing and Serving

Cooked Vegetables

To maximize vegetable quality, always cook vegetables just in time to serve or batch cook for service on the line. Cooked vegetables are best when they are held less than 20 minutes.



Always evaluate food before placing it on the service line. (Use the Quality Scorecard for Cooked Vegetables, Appendix p. 77).

When Quality Falls Short:

- Substitute with a similar food.
- Prior to reusing, verify that food was cooked and maintained at 140 °F.
- If the vegetable can be saved, use it in another dish to avoid waste.
- Find out what went wrong and correct the mistake for the next preparation.

Cooking to Maintain Safety

Cook to at least 140 °F

Cooking to Maintain Nutrients

- Cook vegetables in the smallest amount of liquid possible.
- Cook vegetables in the shortest amount of time for the desired tenderness.
- Cook most vegetables with a lid.
- For vegetables that have a skin, scrub well and cook with the skin on whenever possible. If the vegetable must be peeled, peel as thinly as possible.
- When vegetables are cut, use a sharp blade and cut in the largest pieces that are desirable for the recipe. Pieces should be uniform to allow for even cooking.
- Follow the recipe or directions for cooking a vegetable.
- Cook vegetables just in time to serve on the line – batch or staggered cooking.



Cooking to Maintain Quality of Appearance, Texture, and Flavor

- **Green vegetables** – The color is adversely affected by heat and acid.
 - Cook only until crisp-tender; overcooking will produce a dull olive-green or yellow product.
 - An acid such as lemon juice should never be added to a green vegetable during cooking to avoid the color change.
 - Never add baking soda to green vegetables. While it makes the green color brighter, it destroys important nutrients and can make the vegetables slimy.
- **Orange and yellow vegetables** – The color is more stable than in green vegetables. Cook only until crisp-tender.
- **Red vegetables** – Add a small amount of acid (lemon juice or vinegar) to beets or red cabbage to enhance color and flavor.
- **White vegetables** – Cook in a liquid that is neutral or slightly acidic, covered, to retain the color.

Preparing and Serving

All vegetables should be cooked so they are enticing to your customers and have the appropriate texture and flavor. Follow the recipe for the exact cooking time.

- Vegetables in the cabbage family (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower) develop a very strong, sulfur-like flavor when overcooked.
- Use as little water as possible for cooking most vegetables. Too much water will dilute the flavor. Steam if possible.

Frozen Vegetables

- Remember, these products are already partially cooked. Handle with care!
- DO NOT thaw loosely packed frozen vegetables, such as corn.
- Partially thaw lightly packed vegetables, such as broccoli spears.
- Fully thaw tightly packed vegetables, such as spinach or kale, and corn-on-the-cob.
- COOK until crisp-tender.
- BATCH COOK just in time for meal service.



Canned Vegetables

- Remember, these products are fully cooked during the canning process. Handle with care!
- Heat in the canning liquid to preserve nutrients.
- Heat only enough to bring to the desired temperature of 140 °F.
- BATCH COOK just in time for meal service.

NOTE: Refer to the section on preparing salad bar ingredients (page 21) for information on preparing fresh vegetables.

Fruits

Preparing to Maintain Nutrients

- Use fresh fruits at their peak of ripeness.
- Wash fresh fruits under cool running water immediately before they are peeled or stemmed.
- Cut fresh fruits in the largest pieces that are acceptable for serving.
- Avoid crushing fruit during preparation.
- Follow the recipe or directions for preparing a fruit dish.

Preparing to Maintain Quality

- Prepare fruit dishes that are eye-appealing. Follow the recipe or directions for preparing a fruit to maintain the correct color and shape of the fruit pieces.
- Prepare fruit dishes so they have the appropriate texture.
- Prepare fruit dishes for good flavor typical of the main fruit ingredients.
- Do not overpower main fruit flavor with other ingredients, such as spices.



Preparing and Serving

Preparing to Maintain Freshness of Fresh, Frozen, and Canned Fruit

- Use fresh fruit at the peak of ripeness.
- Thaw frozen fruit in the refrigerator, and use immediately when thawed.
- Maintain canned fruit in a storeroom at 50 °F to 70 °F and use before 1 year. Rotate canned fruit to ensure First-In, First-Out (FIFO) use.
- Chill canned fruit before it is added to a cold fruit dish.
- Store dried fruit in airtight containers to maintain freshness.
- When adding spices to a fruit recipe, follow the recipe exactly to have the best flavor.
- Fruit juice should be kept at or below 41 °F. Cover juice after pouring.
- Pasteurized juice should be used.

Meeting Meal Pattern Requirements



Meeting Requirements

Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches

Specific Requirements:

1. Two or more servings of different vegetables and/or fruits must be served at lunch and/or supper.

2. A serving must be at least 1/8 cup.

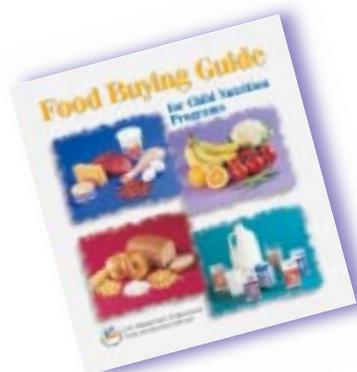
Cooked dried beans and peas may count as a vegetable *if not used to meet the meat/meat alternate requirement in a reimbursable meal.*

A juice product *must contain at least 50 percent full-strength juice* to be counted as a vegetable/fruit component in a reimbursable meal.

Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice *may not meet more than 1/2 of the total requirement for lunch or supper.* However, full-strength juice *may be used to meet the total requirement for breakfast or as one component of a snack.* (Juice may not be counted as one of the snack components if milk is the only other component.)

"Mixture items," such as fruit cocktail and mixed vegetables, *only count as 1 vegetable/fruit serving.*

Large combination vegetable/fruit salads, containing at least 3/4 cup or more of 2 or more different vegetables/fruits with a meat/meat alternate such as a chef's salad or a fruit plate with cottage cheese *are considered as 2 or more servings of the vegetable/fruit component and will meet the full requirement.* If only two vegetables/fruits are included in the salad, *the second must contain a minimum of 1/8 cup vegetable/fruit.*



TIP:

Refer to USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs, Revised 2000*, for additional information on the crediting of vegetables and fruits.

Crediting of Vegetables and Fruits:

- A serving of "canned vegetable" is considered to be drained.
- A serving of "raw vegetable" used in salads with dressing must contain 1/4-cup raw vegetable (pieces, shredded, chopped).
- A serving of "canned or cooked fruit" must include the juice or syrup in which the fruit is packed.
- A serving of "thawed frozen fruit" consists of fruit plus the juice or syrup that accumulates during thawing.

Meeting Requirements

Nutrient Standard/Assisted Nutrient Standard Menu Planning Approaches

Specific requirements:

- Serving sizes of vegetables and fruits must be the same planned portion sizes as on the menus.
- Serving sizes of vegetables and fruits must be what are analyzed and evaluated in meeting the weekly nutrient standards for the appropriate age/grade of students.
- Serving instructions and utensils must be the same as indicated on standardized recipes.
- Foods served must be what are planned and nutrient-analyzed except for last-minute substitutions that fall within the 2-week window. Schools or school districts must document the substitutions and the date they knew of the need for a substitution.



Offer Versus Serve

Offer versus Serve (OVS) allows students to decline a certain number of food items in the meals. The objectives of OVS are to reduce plate waste and encourage schools to offer more food choices.



When implementing OVS, reimbursable meals must contain a certain number and combination of food/menu items based on the meal planning option that is selected. These items must be offered to students before the point-of-service count.

Resource

A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals can provide additional information on Offer versus Serve. Order this resource from USDA's Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/NTISform.html.

Cashier Identification of a Reimbursable Meal

Cashiers must be able to identify reimbursable meals at the point of service.

For all menu planning options, cashiers must know:

- the daily menus,
- the planned portion size of each food item on the menus, and
- the specific food/menu items and combinations of food/menu items that will make up the reimbursable meal.

Self-Service Food and Salad Bars

“Stand-Alone” or Complete Serving Line

Self-serve food bars that are complete serving lines require:

- a cashier at the point of service,
- a separate monitor or restock person.



Meeting Requirements

Part of the Regular or Main Serving Line

Self-service food bars that are part of the regular or main serving line and are not stand-alone lines must be placed before the cashier at the point of service. This ensures that the students receive reimbursable meals when the food bars are included as food items/menu items on regular or main serving line menus.



Portion Control

Often the big questions are: "Did the student receive the appropriate serving size?" and "Do we have enough of a food item to last to the end of the meal period?" Portion control is the procedure to ensure positive answers to these questions. Using the correct serving utensil and preportioned food items are ways to implement portion control.

Serving Utensils

Scoops or dishers, ladles, and measuring-serving spoons of standard sizes are fairly dependable measures for portioning food by volume, and serving food quickly.

Refer to Appendix page 78 for information on serving utensils. For additional information, refer to *The Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, Revised 2000, Pages. I-43 to I-45.

Self-Serve Salad Bars

Self-serve salad bars and serving lines present a unique situation because students determine the serving size, not a cafeteria staff member. By using portioning utensils, the students generally will take the planned portion size along with the total required for the vegetable and fruit items to be creditable. The key to success is to encourage the students to take what they can eat and eat what they take. Generally, the case is that students take more than adequate amounts. Educating students and teachers on salad bar use is important.

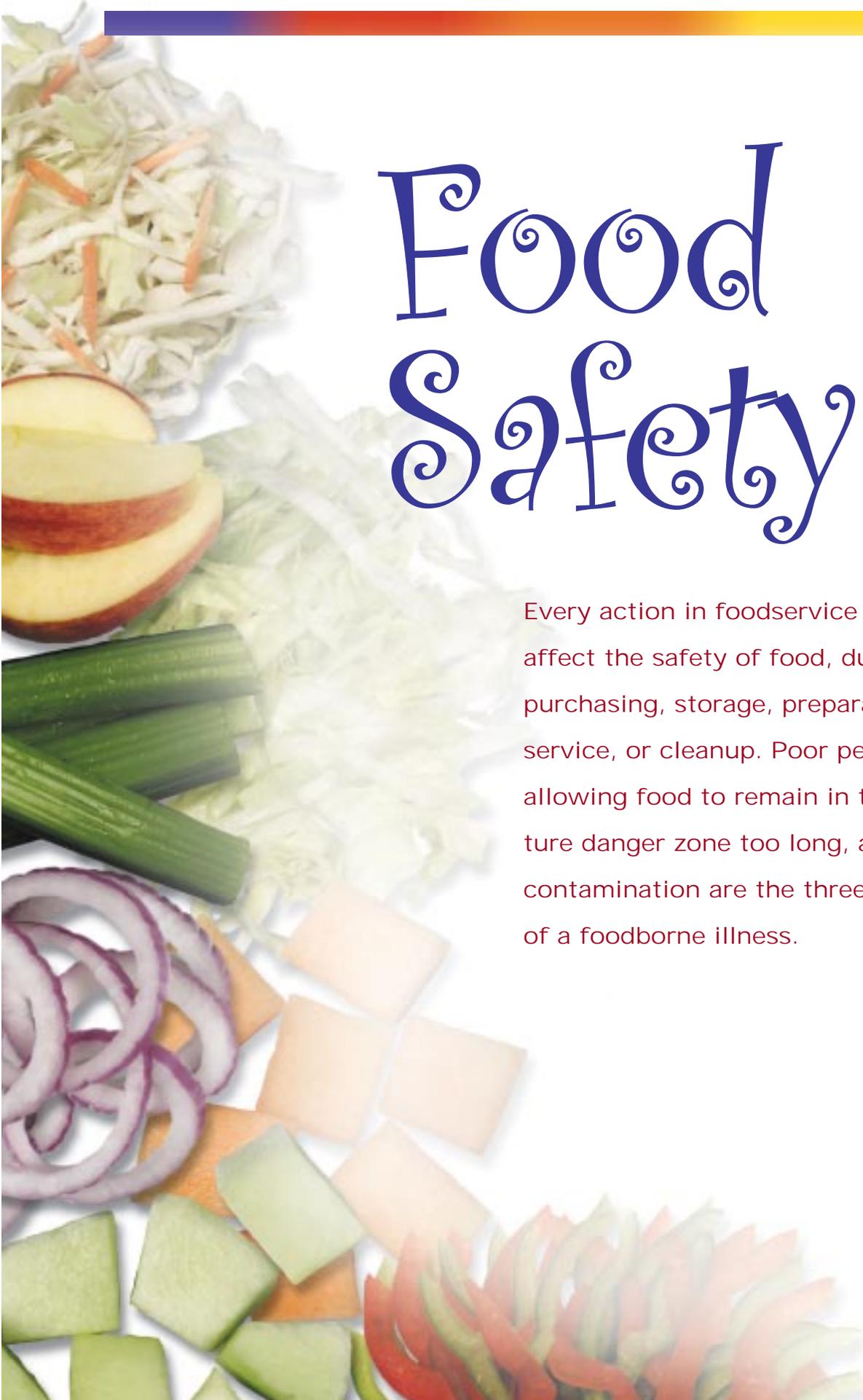


Preportioned Food Items

An option to control portions is to preportion or prepackage vegetables and fruits on the serving line and on the salad bar.

While this is very labor intensive in preparation, the labor is reduced on the serving line. There is less need for monitoring of students and cleaning of the bar. Do a cost analysis to determine which is more beneficial.

On self-serve food bars, prepackaged fresh vegetables and fruits are more sanitary, with a reduced risk of cross-contamination from customers.



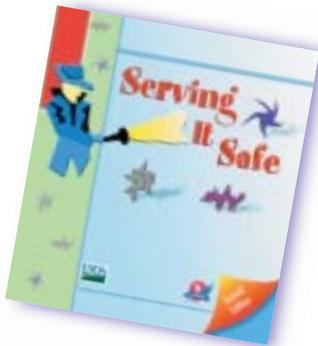
Food Safety

Every action in foodservice can potentially affect the safety of food, during the purchasing, storage, preparation, holding, service, or cleanup. Poor personal hygiene, allowing food to remain in the temperature danger zone too long, and cross-contamination are the three main causes of a foodborne illness.

Food Safety

Foodservice staff should understand:

- a foodborne illness can occur in any foodservice operation,
- trained staff who practice safe and sanitary procedures in handling food at all stages are critical to keeping foods safe, and
- students and adults must be educated on sanitation procedures such as hand-washing before meals, using utensils for self-serve items, and not tasting food while on a serving line.



Resources

- *Serving It Safe: A Manager's Tool Kit* is an excellent training resource on food safety and sanitation. It provides specific information such as temperature guidelines for safely receiving, storing, preparing, and handling leftovers, etc.
- *Food Safety: It's in Your Hands* is a 2-hour satellite teleconference videotape that addresses issues relating to food safety and the prevention of foodborne illness including identifying food safety hazards, avoiding cross-contamination, personal hygiene, and hand washing.



Both of the above resources are available from the National Food Service Management Institute. Contact them at 800-321-3054 or visit their Web site at www.nfsmi.org to order these resources if you do not already have them.

- FDA Food Code, 2001 edition.



Appendixes

Quality Score Card for Salads

Quality Score Card for Fresh Fruits and
Fresh Fruit Menu Items

Quality Score Card for Baked Fruits and
Fruit Desserts

Quality Score Card for Cooked
Vegetables

Utensil Poster

Appendix

Quality Score Card for Salads

Date _____ Name of Menu Item _____

Proudly Prepared by _____

Quality Scored by _____

Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.

Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.

| Quality Standard | Yes | No | NA | Comments |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <i>Appearance</i> | | | | |
| • Bright color typical of the fresh greens | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Bright color typical of other fresh ingredients (no discoloration) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Salad appears moist, not dry or excessively wet | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Salad ingredients are even pieces | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Salad ingredients appear crisp, not limp | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Garnish is edible and appropriate for the salad | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Texture or Consistency</i> | | | | |
| • Salad ingredients are crisp, not soggy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Meat or pasta/rice salads are tender but not mushy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Flavor</i> | | | | |
| • Salad ingredients have a fresh, distinctive flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Seasonings enhance the salad but are not too salty or too tart | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • A choice of lowfat and/or fat-free salad dressings is available | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Service Temperature</i> | | | | |
| • 34°-38 °F | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Quality Score Card for Fresh Fruits and Fresh Fruit Menu Items

| Date _____ Name of Menu Item _____ | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Proudly Prepared by _____ | | | | |
| Quality Scored by _____ | | | | |
| <p><i>Directions:</i> When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.</p> <p><i>Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.</i></p> | | | | |
| Quality Standard | Yes | No | NA | Comments |
| <i>Appearance</i> | | | | |
| • Color is typical of the ripe fruit(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Color is fresh (not marred by discoloration from oxidation) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Fruit pieces are similar in size | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Fruit pieces are intact | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Garnish is edible and appropriate for the dish | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Texture or Consistency</i> | | | | |
| • Fruit is at the peak of ripeness | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • All pieces of fruit have the same texture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Flavor and seasoning</i> | | | | |
| • Fruits have a pleasing, slightly sweet, ripe flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • If seasonings have been used, they are detectable but not overpowering | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Seasonings enhance the fruit flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • If a dressing or sauce is used, it complements the fruit (mild, not overpowering) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Service Temperature</i> | | | | |
| • Chilled – 34°-38 °F | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Appendix

Quality Score Card for Baked Fruits and Fruit Desserts

Date _____ Name of Menu Item _____

Proudly Prepared by _____

Quality Scored by _____

Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.

Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.

| Quality Standard | Yes | No | NA | Comments |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <i>Appearance</i> | | | | |
| • Fruit pieces are similar in size | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Fruit pieces are intact | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Garnish is edible and appropriate for the dish | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Pastry or topping has a golden brown color | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Pastry has a blistery surface | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Texture or Consistency</i> | | | | |
| • All pieces of the fruit have the same texture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Pastry has a flaky or mealy texture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Pastry cuts easily | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Flavor and Seasoning</i> | | | | |
| • Fruits have a pleasing, slightly sweet, ripe flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • If seasonings have been used, they are detectable but not overpowering | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Seasonings enhance the fruit flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Pastry has a pleasant, bland flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Service Temperature</i> | | | | |
| • Pastry desserts – 60°-70 °F | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Hot baked fruit – 160°-180 °F | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Quality Score Card for Cooked Vegetables

| Date _____ Name of Menu Item _____ | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Proudly Prepared by _____ | | | | |
| Quality Scored by _____ | | | | |
| <p><i>Directions:</i> When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.</p> <p><i>Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.</i></p> | | | | |
| Quality Standard | Yes | No | NA | Comments |
| <i>Appearance</i> | | | | |
| • Bright color typical of the vegetable | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Vegetable pieces are similar in size | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Vegetable pieces are intact (pieces are not overcooked with a mushy appearance) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • There is no visible oil or fat | | | | |
| • Garnish is edible and appropriate for the dish | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Texture or Consistency</i> | | | | |
| • Vegetable is fork-tender (slightly crisp and not overcooked) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • All pieces of the vegetable have the same texture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Vegetables in casserole-type recipes are well blended, tender, and identifiable | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Flavor and Seasoning</i> | | | | |
| • Vegetable has a definite, good flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Seasonings are detectable but not overpowering | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • Seasonings enhance the vegetable flavor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • A minimal amount of salt has been added (recipe used) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • A minimal amount or no fat has been added (recipe used) .. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • If a sauce is used, it complements the vegetable (mild, not overpowering) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Service Temperature</i> | | | | |
| • 160°-180 °F | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Scoops (Dishers)



| Size/No. ¹ | Level Measure | Color Code ² |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 6 | 2/3 cup | |
| 8 | 1/2 cup | |
| 10 | 3/8 cup | |
| 12 | 1/3 cup | |
| 16 | 1/4 cup | |
| 20 | 3-1/3 Tbsp | |
| 24 | 2-2/3 Tbsp | |
| 30 | 2 Tbsp | |
| 40 | 1-2/3 Tbsp | |
| 50 | 3-3/4 tsp | |
| 60 | 3-1/4 tsp | |
| 70 | 2-3/4 tsp | |
| 100 | 2 tsp | |

¹ Scoops are left or right hand or squeeze type that can be used for both hands. Number on the scoop indicates how many level scoops make one quart. For example, eight No. 8 scoops = 1 quart.



² Use colored dots matching the brand-specific color coding of scoop sizes.

Ladles Portion Servers



| Ladle fl oz | Approx Measure | Portion Server fl oz |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 oz | 1/8 cup | 1 oz |
| 2 oz | 1/4 cup | 2 oz |
| 3 oz | 3/8 cup | 3 oz |
| 4 oz | 1/2 cup | 4 oz |
| 6 oz | 3/4 cup | 6 oz |
| 8 oz | 1 cup | 8 oz |
| 12 oz | 1-1/2 cups | — |

Ladles and portion servers (measuring-serving spoons that are volume-standardized) are labeled "oz." "Fl oz" would be more accurate since they measure volume, not weight.

Use ladles for serving soups, stews, creamed dishes, sauces, gravies, and other liquid products.

Use portion servers (solid or perforated) for portioning solids and semi-solids such as fruits and vegetables, cookie dough, and condiments.

Cooking or Serving Spoons



Solid Spoons



Perforated Spoons



Slotted Spoons

Spoons vary in length (11", 13", 15", 18", 21") for ease of use in cooking or serving. Spoons can have plastic handles that are heat-resistant. Level scoops, ladles, and portion servers provide more accurate portion control than serving spoons that are not volume-standardized measure.

Specialty Spoons



A thumb notch on a server or spoon handle prevents the spoon from slipping into the pan and prevents hands from sliding into the food. Triple-edge (solid or perforated) spoons have a flat edge that increases the area where the spoon touches the bottom of the pan when stirring.



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